SELECTIONS FROM GANDHI

BY
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FOREWORD

The following pages represent a labour of love. Professor Nirmal Kumar Bose first published his selections in 1934 and they contained extracts from my writings upto 1934.* But my writings have never ceased and so the Professor felt that he should bring up his selections to as late a date as possible, i. e. upto 1942 with isolated later additions. Though therefore this is called a new edition, it is in reality a new book. The earliest and most elaborate attempt was made by the late Amulakhrai in Gujarati. But that was years ago. He covered my writings in Gujarati and Hindi too. The volumes being in Gujarati never attracted much attention. Such is our disregard of our own languages. But I have known nothing so thorough of its kind as these volumes.

Professor N. K. Bose's is such an attempt. He gave me his manuscript early in 1946 when I was in Bengal to do with it what I liked. But my preoccupations left me no time to look at them till for very shame I was compelled to do so. The selections made by the author show the thoroughness with which he had gone into his subject. Those who are interested in my writings will not fail to appreciate the author's labours.

Amki
Noakhali, 30-1-'47

M. K. GANDHI

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PREFACE

Gandhiji has perhaps never written merely for the pleasure of writing. Thought and writing have always been tools with him for more efficient action. They have been used either to clear up a knotty problem in his own mind or in that of his co-workers. His writings, therefore, do not exactly give a correct representation of what he actually *is*, but what he has always tried to be. It is a record of ideals and aspirations, and of criticism of events and situations in the light of those ideals. By their very nature, they reflect the difficulties which have confronted him from time to time; and also how he has been able to meet them, more or less, successfully in the course of life's experiments. The reader should approach this book of selections with that reservation in mind. Then he will be able to gather whatever help he can in the pursuit of his own ideal.

A word is now necessary to explain the arrangement followed in the presentation of the selections. The foundation of Gandhiji's life is formed by his living and growing faith in God, and in the oneness of the whole human family. So his ideas about God have been given the first place in the first chapter. The discipline which every man should follow in order to realize his highest ideal, whether we call it God, or Truth, or Humanity, is common to all; and it comes in the second chapter. The third contains a summary of Gandhiji's views on various philosophical, social and political questions, and may thus be regarded as a summary of the rest of the book. In fact, this is why a few passages occurring elsewhere, have also found place in this chapter of fundamental ideas,

Chapters four to eight contain his views on the production and distribution of wealth, his criticism of existing arrangements in society, and the means he has suggested for bringing about a more desirable transformation. Chapter

nine is an exposition of his political idealism; while ten gives us his practical programme for securing economic as well as political independence for India.

Gandhiji's message is however significant not for India alone. He has proposed the non-violent technique, not only as a substitute for violent conflicts within a narrow social group, but in that of international relations as well. But non-violence cannot be suddenly forced upon an unprepared humanity, and in a hostile social environment. There the man of non-violence has to move cautiously, adapting his step to the exigencies of every special set of circumstances. The chapter on *satyagraha* details how the technique has developed and actually taken shape on the Indian soil. Others may profit by the experiences of India in this direction. This *satyagraha* has moreover demanded from the Indian political worker a measure of idealism and of discipline, which the reader will find described in the following chapter.

The remaining portion of the book is a record of Gandhiji's opinions on various subjects. The fifteenth contains his views on religion, in its institutional aspect; while the sixteenth gives us his ideas on marriage and related topics. His opinion regarding the future role of women in society has also found a place in this chapter. Education comes next; and this is followed by the last chapter covering subjects like Art, Music, Swadeshi, the management of public institutions and so forth.

The book thus covers, in brief, a wide range of subjects and as one progresses in its study, one is often left with a thirst for fuller information on the subject of his interest. The Navajivan Publishing House has been issuing, for some time past, a series of volumes, each containing Gandhiji's writings on one specific topic or another; and the interested reader must turn to them for fuller information, when the files of the *Young India* or the *Harijan* are not available to him. The present selection does not pretend to do anything more than give a glimpse of what he can gather if he ventures through the forest of writings contained in those two journals.

The index at the end of the book has been prepared with some care; and we should advise the reader to use it frequently, so that he may profit by similar passages occurring elsewhere in the body of the book.

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Calcutta 3
26-1-1948

NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE

INTRODUCTION IN GANDHIJI'S OWN WORDS

Restatement of Old Truths

i. A persistent correspondent from Simla asks me whether I intend to found a sect or claim divinity. I have answered him by a private letter. But he would have me make a public declaration for the sake of posterity. I should have thought that I had in the strongest terms repudiated all claim to divinity. I claim to be a humble servant of India and humanity and would like to die in the discharge of such service. I have no desire to found a sect. I am really too ambitious to be satisfied with a sect for a following, for I represent no new truths. I endeavour to follow and represent truth as I know it. I do claim to throw a new light on many an old truth. I hope that this declaration will satisfy my inquirer and others like him. — *YI*, 25-8-21, 267.

ii. I have presented no new principles, but have tried to re-state old principles. I cannot say how far the presentation is correct, but as it represents my honest conviction, and as many friends expect me to solve intricate problems in *ahimsa*, I can only ask them to turn to the series I have been writing. — *YI*, 2-12-26, 421.

My Growing Experiences

iii. At the time of writing I never think of what I have said before. My aim is not to be consistent with my previous statements on a given question, but to be consistent with truth as it may present itself to me at a given moment. The result has been that I have grown from truth to truth; I have saved my memory an undue strain; and what is more, whenever I have been obliged to compare my writing even of fifty years ago with the latest, I have discovered no inconsistency between the two. But friends who observe inconsistency will do well to take the meaning that my latest writing may yield unless, of course, they prefer the old. But before making the choice they should try to see if

there is not an underlying and abiding consistency between the two seeming inconsistencies. —*H*, 30-9-39, 288.

iv. People say that I have changed my view, that I say today something different from what I said years ago. The fact of the matter is that conditions have changed. I am the same. My words and deeds are dictated by prevailing conditions. There has been a gradual evolution in my environment and I react to it as a *satyagrahi*. —*H*, 28-1-39, 445.

v. I am myself daily growing in the knowledge of *satyagraha*. I have no text-book to consult in time of need, not even the *Gita* which I have called my dictionary. *Satyagraha* as conceived by me is a science in the making. It may be that what I claim to be a science may prove to be no science at all and may well prove to be the musings and doings of a fool, if not a madman. It may be that what is true in *satyagraha* is as ancient as the hills. But it has not yet been acknowledged to be of any value in the solution of world problems or rather the one supreme problem of war. It may be that what is claimed to be new in it will prove to be really of no value in terms of that supreme problem. It may be that what are claimed to be victories of *satyagraha* i. e. *ahimsa*, were in reality victories not of truth and non-violence but of the fear of violence.

These possibilities have always been in front of me. I am helpless. All I present to the nation for adoption is an answer to prayer or, which is the same thing, constantly waiting on God. —*H*, 24-9-38, 266.

A Warning

vi. There is another and a graver risk. There is the danger of your Sangh (the Gandhi Seva Sangh) deteriorating into a sect. Whenever there is any difficulty you will turn to my writings in *Young India* and *Harijan* and swear by them. As a matter of fact my writings should be cremated with my body. What I have done will endure, not what I have said and written. I have often said recently that even if all our scriptures were to perish, one *mantra* of *Ishopanishad* was enough to declare the essence of Hinduism, but even that one verse will be of

no avail if there is no one to live it. Even so what I have said and written is useful only to the extent that it has helped you to assimilate the great principles of truth and *ahimsa*. If you have not assimilated them, my writings will be of no use to you. I say this to you as a *satyagrahi* meaning every word of it.

I want you to face the problems that will come before you this week in the spirit of what I have said. My faith in truth and non-violence is ever growing, and as I am ever trying to follow them in my life I too am growing every moment. I see new implications about them. I see them in a newer light every day and read in them a newer meaning. That is why I am constantly placing new proposals before the Spinners' Association, the Harijan Sevak Sangh and the Village Industries Association. That does not mean that I am unsettled or unbalanced; that means that those are living organizations and must ever grow even as a tree is ever growing. I want you also to grow with me. I should not care to know what happens after I am gone, but I do wish that your organization may never be a stagnant pool but an ever growing tree. Forget me therefore; my name is an unnecessary adjunct to the name of the Sangh; cleave not to my name but cleave to the principles, measure every one of your activities by that standard and face fearlessly every problem that arises. — *H*, 1-5-37, 93.

vii. Let Gandhism be destroyed if it stands for error. Truth and *ahimsa* will never be destroyed, but if Gandhism is another name for sectarianism, it deserves to be destroyed. If I were to know, after my death, that what I stood for had degenerated into sectarianism, I should be deeply pained. We have to work away silently. Let no one say that he is a follower of Gandhi. It is enough that I should be my own follower. I know what an inadequate follower I am of myself, for I cannot live up to the convictions I stand for. You are no followers but fellow students, fellow pilgrims, fellow seekers, fellow workers.

We have to make truth and non-violence not matters for mere individual practice but for practice by groups and communities and nations. That at any rate is my

dream. I shall live and die in trying to realize it. My faith helps me to discover new truths every day. *Ahimsa* is the attribute of the soul, and therefore, to be practised by everybody in all the affairs of life. If it cannot be practised in all departments, it has no practical value.

There is always the fear of self-righteousness possessing us, the fear of arrogating to ourselves a superiority we do not possess. Rather than, therefore, call yourselves members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, why not carry truth and *ahimsa* in every home and be individual representatives of them wherever you are? — *H*, 2-3-40, 23,19.

Limitations of Bookish Propaganda

viii. I come now to what is called the 'Gandhian' ideology and the means of propagating it. The propagation of truth and non-violence can be done less by books than by actually living those principles. Life truly lived is more than books. I do not say that we may not issue books and newspapers. I only say that they are not indispensable. If we are true devotees of truth and *ahimsa*, God will endow us with the requisite intellect to solve problems. That devotion presupposes the will to understand our opponent's viewpoint. We must make a sincere effort to enter into his mind and to understand his viewpoint. That is what is meant by non-violence walking straight into the mouth of violence. If we are armed with that attitude of mind, we may hope to propagate *ahimsa* principles. Without that, book and newspaper propaganda is of no avail. You do not know with what indifference I used to run *Young India*. I did not shed a single tear when *Young India* had to be stopped. But *satyagraha*, which it was intended to help, survived it. For *satyagraha* does not depend on outside help, it derives all its strength from within. — *H*, 13-5-39, 122.

An Appeal to Friends

ix. There is always a saving clause about all my advice. No one need follow it unless it appeals to his head and heart. No one who has honestly the inner call need be deterred from obeying it because of my advice. In other

words, it applies only to those who are not conscious of any inner call and who have faith in my riper experience and soundness of judgment. — *H*, 15-7-39, 197.

Am Tired of Mahatma

x. The scene in Serajganj Conference over attaching 'Mahatma' to my name has caused deep pain to me. Those who out of their infatuation for the application of the title 'Mahatma' to me either howled down the gentleman who would not use the name or who implored him to do so, rendered no service to the cause or to me. They harmed the cause of non-violence and pained me. What relish could they have in a person using a title from compulsion? I congratulate the gentleman upon his courage in having withdrawn from the Conference rather than use a title under compulsion. He showed, in my opinion, a truer appreciation of what I stand for than my blind admirers. I assure all my admirers and friends that they will please me better if they will forget the Mahatma and remember Gandhiji as the gentleman in question quite courteously did, or think of me simply as Gandhi. The highest honour that my friends can do me is to enforce in their own lives the programme that I stand for or to resist me to their utmost if they do not believe in it. Blind adoration, in the age of action is perfectly valueless, is often embarrassing and equally often painful. — *YI*, 12-6-24, 197.

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SELECTIONS FROM GANDHI

I

GOD

1. My own experience has led me to the knowledge that the fullest life is impossible without an immovable belief in a Living Law in obedience to which the whole universe moves. A man without that faith is like a drop thrown out of the ocean bound to perish. Every drop in the ocean shares its majesty and has the honour of giving us the ozone of life. —*H*, 25-4-36, 84.

God as truth and love

2. There is an indefinable mysterious power that pervades everything. I feel it, though I do not see it. It is this unseen power that makes itself felt and yet defies proof, because it is so unlike all that I perceive through my senses. It transcends reason. But it is possible to reason out the existence of God to a limited extent. —*YI*, 11-10-28, 340.

3. I have made the world's faith in God my own, and as my faith is ineffaceable, I regard that faith as amounting to experience. However, as it may be said that to describe faith as experience is to tamper with Truth, it may perhaps be more correct to say that I have no word for characterizing my belief in God. —*Auto*, 341.

4. God is that indefinable something which we all feel but which we do not know. To me God is Truth and Love, God is ethics and morality. God is fearlessness, God is the source of light and life and yet He is above and beyond all these. God is conscience. He is even the atheism of the atheist. He transcends speech and reason. He is a personal God to those who need His touch. He is the purest essence. He simply Is to those who have faith. He is long suffering. He is patient but He is also terrible. He is the greatest democrat the world knows. He is the greatest tyrant ever known. We are *not*, He alone *Is*. *YI*, 5-3-25, 81.

5. You have asked me why I consider that God is Truth. In my early youth I was taught to repeat what in Hindu scriptures are known as one thousand names of God. But these one thousand names of God were by no means exhaustive. We believe — and I think it is the truth — that God has as many names as there are creatures and, therefore, we also say that God is nameless and since God has many forms we also consider Him formless, and since He speaks to us through many tongues we consider Him to be speechless and so on. And when I came to study Islam I found that Islam too had many names for God. I would say with those who say God is Love, God is Love. But deep down in me I used to say that though God may be God, God is Truth, above all. If it is possible for the human tongue to give the fullest description, I have come to the conclusion that for myself God is Truth. But two years ago, I went a step further and said Truth is God. You will see the fine distinction between the two statements, *viz.* that God is Truth and Truth is God. And I came to that conclusion after a continuous and relentless search after Truth which began nearly fifty years ago. I then found that the nearest approach to Truth was through love. But I also found that love has many meanings in the English language at least and that human love in the sense of passion could become a degrading thing also. I found, too, that love in the sense of *ahimsa* had only a limited number of votaries in the world. But I never found a double meaning in connection with truth and not even the atheists had demurred to the necessity or power of truth. But in their passion for discovering truth the atheists have not hesitated to deny the very existence of God — from their own point of view rightly. And it was because of this reasoning that I saw that rather than say God is Truth I should say Truth is God. I recall the name of Charles Bradlaugh who delighted to call himself an atheist, but knowing as I do something of him, I would never regard him as an atheist. I would call him a God-fearing man, though, I know, he would reject the claim. His face would redden if I would say,

" Mr. Bradlaugh, you are a truth-fearing man and not a God-fearing man." I would automatically disarm his criticism by saying that Truth is God, as I have disarmed the criticism of many a young man. Add to this the difficulty that millions have taken the name of God and in His name committed nameless atrocities. Not that scientists very often do not commit cruelties in the name of truth. I know how in the name of truth and science inhuman cruelties are perpetrated on animals when men perform vivisection. There are thus a number of difficulties in the way, no matter how you describe God. But the human mind is a limited thing, and you have to labour under limitations when you think of a being or entity who is beyond the power of man to grasp. And then we have another thing in Hindu philosophy, *viz.* God alone is and nothing else exists, and the same truth you find emphasized and exemplified in the *Kalema* of Islam. There you find it clearly stated — that God alone is and nothing else exists. In fact the Sanskrit word for Truth is a word which literally means that which exists — *Sat*. For these and several other reasons that I can give you I have come to the conclusion that the definition — Truth is God — gives me the greatest satisfaction. And when you want to find Truth as God the only inevitable means is Love, *i. e.* non-violence, and since I believe that ultimately means and end are convertible terms, I should not hesitate to say that God is Love.

'What then is Truth ?'

A difficult question, but I have solved it for myself by saying that it is what the voice within tells you. How, then, you ask, different people think of different and contrary truths ? Well, seeing that the human mind works through innumerable media and that the evolution of the human mind is not the same for all, it follows that what may be truth for one may be untruth for another, and hence those who have made experiments have come to the conclusion that there are certain conditions to be observed in making those experiments. Just as for conducting scientific experiments

there is an indispensable scientific course of instruction, in the same way strict preliminary discipline is necessary to qualify a person to make experiments in the spiritual realm. Everyone should, therefore, realize his limitations before he speaks of his inner voice. Therefore, we have the belief based upon experience, that those who would make individual search after truth as God, must go through several vows, as for instance, the vow of truth, the vow of *brahmacharya* (purity) — for you cannot possibly divide your love for Truth and God with anything else — the vow of non-violence, of poverty and non-possession. Unless you impose on yourselves the five vows, you may not embark on the experiment at all. There are several other conditions prescribed, but I must not take you through all of them. Suffice it to say that those who have made these experiments know that it is not proper for everyone to claim to hear the voice of conscience and it is because we have at the present moment everyone claiming the right of conscience without going through any discipline whatsoever that there is so much untruth being delivered to a bewildered world. All that I can in true humility present to you is that truth is not to be found by anybody who has not got an abundant sense of humility. If you would swim on the bosom of the ocean of Truth you must reduce yourself to a zero. Further than this I cannot go along this fascinating path. — *YI*, 31-12-31, 427.

God as truth and the law—

6. I do not regard God as a person. Truth for me is God, and God's Law and God are not different things or facts, in the sense that an earthly king and his law are different. Because God is an Idea, Law Him-self. Therefore, it is impossible to conceive God as breaking the Law. He, therefore, does not rule our actions and withdraw Himself. When we say He rules our actions, we are simply using human language and we try to limit Him. Otherwise, He and His Law abide everywhere and govern everything. Therefore, I do not think that He answers in every detail every request of ours, but there is no doubt that He rules

our action, and I literally believe that not a blade of grass grows or moves without His will. The free will we enjoy is less than that of a passenger on a crowded deck.

"Do you feel a sense of freedom in your communion with God?"

I do. I do not feel cramped as I would on a boat full of passengers. Although I know that my freedom is less than that of a passenger, I appreciate that freedom as I have imbibed through and through the central teaching of the *Gita* that man is the maker of his own destiny in the sense that he has freedom of choice as to the manner in which he uses that freedom. But he is no controller of results. The moment he thinks he is, he comes to grief. —*H*, 23-3-40, 55.

The character of truth—

7. Truth is by nature self-evident. As soon as you remove the cobwebs of ignorance that surround it, it shines clear. —*YI*, 27-5-26, 189.

8. Every expression of truth has in it the seeds of propagation, even as the sun cannot hide its light. —*MR*, 1935, 413.

The way of realizing truth—

9. Life is a very complex thing, and truth and non-violence present problems, which often defy analysis and judgment. One discovers truth and the method of applying the only legitimate means of vindicating it, i. e. *satyagraha* or soul-force, by patient endeavour and silent prayer. I can only assure friends that I spare no pains to grope my way to the right, and that humble but constant endeavour and silent prayer are always my two trusty companions along the weary but beautiful path that all seekers must tread. —*YI*, 1-6-21, 174.

10. You cannot realize the wider consciousness, unless you subordinate completely reason and intellect, and the body, too. —*H*.

11. It is unnecessary to believe in an extra mundane Power called God in order to sustain our faith in *ahisma*. But God is not a Power residing in the clouds. God is an

unseen Power residing within us and nearer to us than finger-nails to the flesh. There are many powers lying hidden within us and we discover them by constant struggle. Even so may we find this Supreme Power if we make diligent search with the fixed determination to find Him. One such way is the way of *ahimsa*. It is so very necessary because God is in every one of us and, therefore, we have to identify ourselves with every human being without exception. This is called cohesion or attraction in scientific language. In the popular language it is called love. It binds us to one another and to God. *Ahimsa* and love are one and the same thing. I hope this is all clear to you. —(*From a private letter dated Sevagram, 1-6-42*).

Confession of faith—

12. I am but a poor struggling soul yearning to be wholly good — wholly truthful and wholly non-violent in thought, word and deed; but ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be true. It is a painful climb, but the pain of it is a positive pleasure to me. Each step upward makes me feel stronger and fit for the next. —*YI*, 9-4-25, 126.

13. But I know that I have still before me a difficult path to traverse. I must reduce myself to zero. So long as one does not of his own free will put himself last among his fellow creatures, there is no salvation for him. *Ahimsa* is the farthest limit of humility. —*Auto*, 616.

14. I am impatient to realize the presence of my Maker, Who to me embodies Truth, and in the early part of my career I discovered that if I was to realize Truth, I must obey, even at the cost of my life, the law of Love.—*NV*, 319.

15. I have but shadowed forth my intense longing to lose myself in the Eternal and become merely a lump of clay in the Potter's divine hands so that my service may become more certain because uninterrupted by the baser self in me. —*YI*, 17-11-21, 377.

Realization of God—

16. God as Truth has been for me a treasure beyond price; may He be so to every one of us. —*YM*, 6.

17. Devotion to this Truth is the sole justification for our existence. —*YM*, 2.

18. But He is no God who merely satisfies the intellect, if He ever does. God to be God must rule the heart and transform it. He must express Himself in every the smallest act of His votary. This can only be done through a definite realization more real than the five senses can ever produce. Sense perceptions can be, often are, false and deceptive, however real they may appear to us. Where there is realization outside the senses it is infallible. It is proved not by extraneous evidence but in the transformed conduct and character of those who have felt the real presence of God within. Such testimony is to be found in the experiences of an unbroken line of prophets and sages in all countries and climes. To reject this evidence is to deny oneself. —*YI*, 11-10-28, 340.

Perfection not possible—

19. But it is impossible for us to realize perfect Truth so long as we are imprisoned in this mortal frame. We can only visualize it in our imagination. We cannot, through the instrumentality of this ephemeral body, see face to face Truth which is eternal. That is why in the last resort one must depend on faith. —*YM*, 7.

20. No one can attain perfection while he is in the body for the simple reason that the ideal state is impossible so long as one has not completely overcome his ego, and ego cannot be wholly got rid of so long as one is tied down by the shackles of the flesh. —*YI*, 20-9-28, 319.

21. Man will ever remain imperfect, and it will always be his part to try to be perfect. So that perfection in love or non-possession will remain an unattainable ideal as long as we are alive, but towards which we must ceaselessly strive. —*MR*, 1935, 412.

Self-surrender—

22. Our existence as embodied beings is purely momentary; what are a hundred years in eternity? But if we shatter the chains of egotism, and melt into the ocean of humanity, we share its dignity. To feel that we are something

is to set up a barrier between God and ourselves; to cease feeling that we are something is to become one with God. A drop in the ocean partakes of the greatness of its parent, although it is unconscious of it. But it is dried up as soon as it enters upon an existence independent of the ocean. We do not exaggerate, when we say that life is a mere bubble.

A life of service must be one of humility. He, who could sacrifice his life for others, has hardly time to reserve for himself a place in the sun. Inertia must not be mistaken for humility, as it has been in Hinduism. True humility means most strenuous and constant endeavour entirely directed towards the service of humanity. God is continuously in action without resting for a single moment. If we would serve Him or become one with Him, our activity must be as unwearied as His. There may be momentary rest in store for the drop which is separated from the ocean, but not for the drop in the ocean, which knows no rest. The same is the case with ourselves. As soon as we become one with the ocean in the shape of God, there is no more rest for us, nor indeed do we need rest any longer. Our very sleep is action. For we sleep with the thought of God in our hearts. This restlessness constitutes true rest. This never-ceasing agitation holds the key to peace ineffable. This supreme state of total surrender is difficult to describe, but not beyond the bounds of human experience. It has been attained by many dedicated souls, and may be attained by ourselves as well. This is the goal which we of the Satyagraha Ashram have set before ourselves; all our observances and activities are calculated to assist us in reaching it. We shall reach it some day all unawares if we have truth in us.* —*YM*, 68.

23. No niggardly acceptance of the inevitable will appear pleasing to God. It must be a thorough change of heart. *YI*, 2-2-22, 74.

* "We shall reach it some day all unawares while we are pursuing this, that and the other line of noble action. It has a disconcerting knack of eluding pursuit if we make it an object of direct action."— as it appeared originally in the cyclostyled edition of *YI*.

24. I must go with God as my only guide. He is a jealous Lord. He will allow no one to share His authority. One has, therefore, to appear before Him in all one's weakness, empty-handed and in a spirit of full surrender, and then He enables you to stand before a whole world and protects you from harm. —*YI*, 3-9-31, 247.

Regarding himself—

25. I have no special revelation of God's will. My firm belief is that He reveals Himself daily to every human being but we shut our ears to 'the still small voice'. We shut our eyes to the Pillar of Fire in front of us. I *realize* His omnipresence. —*YI*, 25-5-21, 162.

' One step enough for me '—

26. I do not want to foresee the future. I am concerned with taking care of the present. God has given me no control over the moment following. —*YI*, 26-12-24, 427.

27. The impenetrable darkness that surrounds us is not a curse but a blessing. He has given us power to see only the step in front of us, and it should be enough if Heavenly light reveals that step to us. We can then sing with Newman, ' One step enough for me '. And we may be sure from our past experience that the next step will always be in view. In other words, the impenetrable darkness is nothing so impenetrable as we imagine. But it seems impenetrable when, in our impatience, we want to look beyond that one step. —*H*, 20-4-34, 78.

Life and death—

28. We are living in the midst of death. What is the value of ' working for our own schemes ' when they might be reduced to naught in the twinkling of an eye, or when we may equally swiftly and unawares be taken away from them ? But we may feel strong as a rock, if we could truthfully say ' we work for God and His schemes '. Then nothing perishes. All perishing is then only what seems. Death and destruction have *then, but only then* no reality about them. For death and destruction is then but a change. —*YI*, 23-9-26, 333.

Prayer—

29. Prayer is the very soul and essence of religion, and, therefore, prayer must be the very core of the life of man, for no man can live without religion.— *YI*, 23-1-30, 25.

30. When a man is down, he prays to God to lift him up. The appalling disaster in Quetta paralyses one. It baffles all attempt at reconstruction. The whole truth about the disaster will perhaps never be known. The dead cannot be recalled to life.

Human effort must be there always. Those who are left behind must have help. Such reconstruction as is possible will no doubt be undertaken. All this and much more along the same line can never be a substitute for prayer.

But why pray at all? Does not God, if there be one, know what has happened? Does He stand in need of prayer to enable Him to do His duty?

No, God needs no reminder. He is within everyone. Nothing happens without His permission. Our prayer is a heart search. It is a reminder to ourselves that we are helpless without His support. No effort is complete without prayer, —without a definite recognition that the best human endeavour is of no effect if it has not God's blessing behind. Prayer is a call to humility. It is a call to self-purification, to inward search.

I ask those who appreciate the necessity of inward purification to join in the prayer that we may read the purpose of God in such visitations, that they may humble us and prepare us to face our Maker whenever the call comes, and that we may be ever ready to share the sufferings of our fellows whoever they may be. —*H*, 8-6-35, 132.

31. Prayer is not asking. It is a longing of the soul. It is daily admission of one's weakness.... It is better in prayer to have a heart without words than words without a heart. —*YI*, 23-1-30, 25.

God's punishment—

32. It is easy enough to say, 'I do not believe in God.' For God permits all things to be said of Him with impunity.

He looks at our acts. And any breach of His Law carries with it, not its vindictive, but its purifying, compelling punishment. —*YI*, 23-9-26, 333.

Divine aid —

33. God is the hardest taskmaster I have known on earth, and he tries you through and through. And when you find that your faith is failing or your body is failing you, and you are sinking, He comes to your assistance somehow or other and proves to you that you must not lose your faith and that He is always at your beck and call, but on His terms, not on your terms. —*Nat*, 1069.

II

DISCIPLINE FOR THE REALIZATION OF TRUTH

34. Means and end are convertible terms in my philosophy of life. —*YI*, 26-12-24, 424.

Our limitations —

35. Knowledge is limitless and so also the application of truth. Every day we add to our knowledge of the power of the *Atman*, and we shall keep on doing ever the same. New experience will teach us new duties, but truth shall ever be the same. Who has ever known it in its entirety ? —*YI*, 8-4-26, 131.

Non-violence —

36. I have nothing new to teach the world. Truth and Non-violence are as old as the hills. All I have done is to try experiments in both on as vast a scale as I could. In doing so I have sometimes erred and learnt by my errors. Life and its problems have thus become to me so many experiments in the practice of truth and non-violence. As a Jain *muni* once rightly said I was not so much a votary of *ahimsa* as I was of truth, and I put the latter in the first place and the former in the second. For, as he put it, I was capable of sacrificing non-violence for the sake of Truth. In fact it was in the course of my pursuit of truth that I discovered non-violence. —*H*, 28-3-36, 49.

37. *Ahimsa* and Truth are so intertwined that it is practically impossible to disentangle and separate them. They are like the two sides of a coin, or rather a smooth unstamped metallic disc. Who can say, which is the obverse, and which the reverse ? Nevertheless, *ahimsa* is the means; Truth is the end. Means to be means must always be within our reach, and so *ahimsa* is our supreme duty. If we take care of the means, we are bound to reach the end sooner or later. When once we have grasped this point, final victory is beyond question. Whatever difficulties we encounter, whatever apparent reverses we sustain, we may not give up the quest for Truth which alone is, being God Himself. —*YM*, 13.

38. The path of Truth is as narrow as it is straight. Even so is that of *ahimsa*. It is like balancing oneself on the edge of a sword. By concentration an acrobat can walk on a rope. But the concentration required to tread the path of Truth and *ahimsa* is far greater. The slightest inattention brings one tumbling to the ground. One can realize Truth and *ahimsa* only by ceaseless striving. —*YM*, 7.

Realization of non-violence comes by training—

39. Non-violence is not a mechanical performance. It is the finest quality of the heart and comes by training. *YI*, 16-4-31, 75.

40. It takes a fairly strenuous course of training to attain to a mental state of non-violence. In daily life it has to be a course of discipline though one may not like it ,like, for instance, the life of a soldier. But I agree that unless there is hearty cooperation of the mind, the mere outward observance will be simply a mask, harmful both to the man himself and others. The perfect state is reached only when mind and body and speech are in proper coordination. But it is always a case of intense mental struggle. —*YI*, 1-10-31, 287.

Patience—

41. Good travels at a snail's pace. Those who want to do good are not selfish, they are not in a hurry, they know that to impregnate people with good requires a long time. —*IHR*, 21.

42. Having flung aside the sword, there is nothing except the cup of love which I can offer to those who oppose me. It is by offering that cup that I expect to draw them close to me. I cannot think of permanent enmity between man and man and, believing as I do in the theory of rebirth, I live in the hope that, if not in this birth, in some other birth, I shall be able to hug all humanity in friendly embrace.—*YI*, 2-4-31, 54.

43. This is the path of *ahimsa*. It may entail continuous suffering and the cultivating of endless patience. Thus step by step we learn how to make friends with all the world; we realize the greatness of God—or Truth. Our peace of mind increases in spite of suffering; we become braver and more enterprising; we understand more clearly the difference between what is everlasting and what is not; we learn how to distinguish between what is our duty and what is not. Our pride melts away, and we become humble. Our worldly attachments diminish, and so does the evil within us diminish from day to day.—*YM*, 10.

Fearlessness—

44. Fearlessness connotes freedom from all external fear—fear of disease, bodily injury and death, of dispossession, of losing one's nearest and dearest, of losing reputation or giving offence, and so on.—*YM*, 41.

45. We must give up all external fears. But the internal foes we must always fear. We are rightly afraid of animal passion, anger, and the like. External fears cease of their own accord, when once we have conquered these traitors within the camp. All such fears revolve round the body as the centre, and will, therefore, disappear as soon as one gets rid of attachment for the body. We thus find that all external fear is the baseless fabric of our own vision. Fear has no place in our hearts, when we have shaken off the attachment for wealth, for family and for the body. Nothing whatever in the world is ours. Even we ourselves are His. When we cease to be masters, and reduce ourselves to the rank of servants, humbler than the very dust under our feet, all fears will roll away like mists; we

shall attain ineffable peace, and see *Satyanarayan* (the God of Truth) face to face. —*YM*, 43.

46. The pursuit of Truth is true *bhakti* (devotion). It is the path that leads to God, and, therefore, there is no place in it for cowardice, no place for defeat. It is the talisman by which death itself becomes the portal to life eternal. —*YM*, 5.

47. Just as one must learn the art of killing in the training for violence, so one must learn the art of dying in the training for non-violence. Violence does not mean emancipation from fear, but discovering the means of combating the cause of fear. Non-violence, on the other hand, has no cause for fear. The votary of non-violence has to cultivate the capacity for sacrifice of the highest type in order to be free from fear. He recks not if he should lose his land, his wealth, his life. He who has not overcome all fear cannot practise *ahimsa* to perfection. The votary of *ahimsa* has only one fear, that is of God. He who seeks refuge in God ought to have a glimpse of the *Atman* that transcends the body; and the moment one has a glimpse of the Imperishable *Atman* one sheds the love of the perishable body. Training in non-violence is thus diametrically opposed to training in violence. Violence is needed for the protection of things external, non-violence is needed for the protection of the *Atman*, for the protection of one's honour. —*H*, 1-9-40, 268.

Non-possession —

48. If we are to be non-violent, we must then not wish for anything on this earth which the meanest or the lowest of human beings cannot have. —*Ceylon*, 132.

49. Possession implies provision for the future. A seeker after Truth, a follower of the law of Love cannot hold anything against tomorrow. God never stores for the morrow; He never creates more than what is strictly needed for the moment. If, therefore, we repose faith in His providence, we should rest assured that He will give us every day our daily bread, meaning everything that we require. Perfect fulfilment of the ideal of Non-possession requires, that man

should, like the birds, have no roof over his head, no clothing and no stock of food for the morrow. He will indeed need his daily bread, but it will be God's business, and not his, to provide for it. — *YM*, 34.

50. From the standpoint of pure Truth, the body too is a possession. It has been truly said, that desire for enjoyment creates bodies for the soul. When this desire vanishes, there remains no further need for the body, and man is free from the vicious cycle of births and deaths. The soul is omnipresent; why should she care to be confined within the cage-like body, or do evil and even kill for the sake of that cage? We thus arrive at the ideal of total renunciation, and learn to use the body for the purposes of service so long as it exists, so much so that service, and not bread, becomes with us the staff of life. We eat and drink, sleep and wake, for service alone. Such an attitude of mind brings us real happiness, and the beatific vision in the fulness of time.— *YM*, 37.

51. Love and exclusive possession can never go together. Theoretically when there is perfect love, there must be perfect non-possession. The body is our last possession. So a man can only exercise perfect love and be completely dispossessed, if he is prepared to embrace death and renounces his body for the sake of human service.

But that is true in theory only. In actual life, we can hardly exercise perfect love, for the body as a possession, will always remain with us. Man will ever remain imperfect, and it will always be his part to try to be perfect. So that perfection in love or non-possession will remain an unattainable ideal as long as we are alive, but towards which we must ceaselessly strive.— *MR*, 1935, 412.

Voluntary Suffering for the sake of Love

52. In the application of Satyagraha, I discovered in the earliest stages that pursuit of Truth did not admit of violence being inflicted on one's opponent but that he must be weaned from error by patience and sympathy. For, what appears to be Truth to the one may appear to be error to another. And patience means self-suffering. So the doctrine

came to mean vindication of Truth, not by infliction of suffering on the opponent, but on one's self.— *YI*, Nov. 1919, *Tagore*, 6.

53. The Satyagrahi seeks to convert his opponent by sheer force of character and suffering. The purer he is and the more he suffers, the quicker the progress. — *YI*, 18-9-24, 306.

54. The religion of *ahimsa* consists in allowing others the maximum of convenience at the maximum of inconvenience to us, even at the risk of life.— *YI*, 2-12-26, 422.

55. It is no non-violence if we merely love those that love us. It is non-violence only when we love those that hate us. I know how difficult it is to follow this grand law of love. But are not all great and good things difficult to do ? Love of the hater is the most difficult of all. But by the grace of God even this most difficult thing becomes easy to accomplish if we want to do it.— (From *a private letter dated* 31-12-34)

56. I saw that nations like individuals could only be made through the agony of the Cross and in no other way. Joy comes not out of infliction of pain on others but out of pain voluntarily borne by oneself.— *YI*, 31-12-31, 418.

57. Suffering, cheerfully endured, ceases to be suffering and is transmuted into an ineffable joy.—*YI*, 13-10-21, 327.

Purity

58. To see the universal and all-pervading spirit of Truth face to face one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself. Identification with everything that lives is impossible without self-purification. God can never be realized by one who is not pure in heart.—*Auto*, 615.

Self-restraint

59. Sex urge is a fine and noble thing. There is nothing to be ashamed of in it. But it is meant only for the act of creation. Any other use of it is a sin against God and humanity.—*H*, 28-3-36, 53.

60. Although I have always been a conscientious worker, I can clearly recall the fact that this indulgence interfered

with my work. It was the consciousness of this limitation that put me on the track of self-restraint.—*H*, 4-4-36, 61.

61. A man, whose activities are wholly consecrated to the realization of Truth, which requires utter selflessness, can have no time for the selfish purpose of begetting children and running a household.— *YM*, 14.

God's Grace Essential for Perfect Self-control

62. Perfection or freedom from error comes only from grace. Without an unreserved surrender to His grace, complete mastery over thought is impossible. This is the teaching of every great book in religion, and I am realizing the truth of it every moment of my striving after that perfect *brahmacharya*.— *Auto*, 388.

But the Quest is Endless

63. The goal ever recedes from us. The greater the progress the greater the recognition of our unworthiness. Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment. Full effort is full victory.—*YI*, 9-3-22, 141.

III

FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS AND IDEAS

64. Abstract truth has no value unless it incarnates in human beings who represent it by proving their readiness to die for it. —*YI*, 22-12-21, 424.

Seeing Truth in Fragments

65. Does not God Himself appear to different individuals in different aspects? Still we know that He is one. But Truth is the right designation of God. Hence there is nothing wrong in everyone following Truth according to his lights. Indeed it is his duty to do so. Then if there is a mistake on the part of anyone so following Truth, it will be automatically set right. For the quest of Truth involves *tapas*—self-suffering, sometimes even unto death. There can be no place in it for even a trace of self-interest. In such selfless search for Truth nobody can lose his bearings for long. Directly he takes to the wrong path he stumbles, and is thus redirected to the right path. —*YM*, 4.

66. The golden rule of conduct, therefore, is mutual toleration, seeing that we will never all think alike and we shall see *Truth* in fragment and from different angles of vision. Conscience is not the same thing for all. Whilst, therefore, it is a good guide for individual conduct, imposition of that conduct upon all will be an insufferable interference with everybody's freedom of conscience. —*YI*, 23-9-26, 334.

67. Q. With regard to your *Satyagraha* doctrine, so far as I understand it, it involves the pursuit of Truth and in that pursuit you invite suffering on yourself and do not cause violence to anybody else.

A. Yes, sir.

Q. However honestly a man may strive in his search for Truth, his notions of Truth may be different from the notions of others. Who then is to determine the Truth?

A. The individual himself would determine that.

Q. Different individuals would have different views as to Truth. Would that not lead to confusion?

A. I do not think so.

Q. Honestly striving after Truth is different in every case?

A. That is why the non-violence part was a necessary corollary. Without that there would be confusion and worse. — *Tagore,* 29.

68. Courtesy towards opponents and eagerness to understand their view-point is the ABC of non-violence — *HS,* 20-7-44.

69. The very insistence on Truth has taught me to appreciate the beauty of compromise. It has often meant endangering my life and incurring the displeasure of friends. But Truth is hard as adamant and tender as a blossom. — *Auto,* 184.

Propagation of Truth

70. *Q.* Should we not confine our pursuit of Truth to ourselves and not press it upon the world, because we know that it is ultimately limited in character?

A. You cannot so circumscribe Truth even if you try. Every expression of Truth has in it the seeds of propagation, even as the sun cannot hide its light. — *MR,* 1935, 413.

71. Spiritual experiences are shared by us whether we wish it or not — by our lives, not by our speech, which is a most imperfect vehicle of experience. Spiritual experiences are deeper even than thought. — *Sabarmati* - 1928, 19.

His Conception of the Law of Life

72. I do dimly perceive that whilst everything around me is ever changing, ever dying, there is underlying all that change a living power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves and recreates. That informing power or spirit is God. And since nothing else I see merely through the senses can or will persist, He alone is.

And is this power benevolent or malevolent? I see it as purely benevolent, for I can see that in the midst of death life persists, in the midst of untruth truth persists, in the midst of darkness light persists. Hence I gather that God is Life, Truth, Light. He is Love. He is the supreme Good. — *YI,* 11-10-28, 340.

73. Though there is repulsion enough in Nature, she *lives* by attraction. Mutual love enables Nature to persist. Man does not live by destruction. Self-love compels regard for others. Nations cohere because there is mutual regard among individuals composing them. Some day we must extend the national law to the universe, even as we have extended the family law to form nations — a larger family. — *YI*, 2-3-22, 130.

74. The fact that there are so many men still alive in the world shows that it is based not on the force of arms but on the force of truth or love. Therefore, the greatest and most unimpeachable evidence of the success of this force is to be found in the fact that, in spite of the wars of the world, it still lives on.

Thousands, indeed tens of thousands, depend for their existence on a very active working of this force. Little quarrels of millions of families in their daily lives disappear before the exercise of this force. Hundreds of nations live in peace. History does not and cannot take note of this fact. History is really a record of every interruption of the even working of the force of love or of the soul. Two brothers quarrel; one of them repents and re-awakens the love that was lying dormant in him; the two again begin to live in peace; nobody takes note of this. But if the two brothers, through the intervention of solicitors or some other reason take up arms or go to law — which is another form of the exhibition of brute force,— their doings would be immediately noticed in the press, they would be the talk of their neighbours and would probably go down to history. And what is true of families and communities is true of nations. There is no reason to believe that there is one law for families and another for nations. History, then, is a record of an interruption of the course of nature. Soul-force, being natural, is not noted in history. — *IHR*, 45.

His Philosophy of History

75. I believe that the sum total of the energy of mankind is not to bring us down but to lift us up, and that

is the result of the definite, if unconscious, working of the law of love. — *YI*, 12-11-31, 355.

76. Human society is a ceaseless growth, an unfoldment in terms of spirituality. — *YI*, 16-9-26, 324.

77. If we turn our eyes to the time of which history has any record down to our own time, we shall find that man has been steadily progressing towards *ahimsa*. Our remote ancestors were cannibals. Then came a time when they were fed up with cannibalism and they began to live on chase. Next came a stage when man was ashamed of leading the life of a wandering hunter. He therefore took to agriculture and depended principally on mother earth for his food. Thus from being a nomad he settled down to civilized stable life, founded villages and towns, and from member of a family he became member of a community and a nation. All these are signs of progressive *ahimsa* and diminishing *himsa*. Had it been otherwise, the human species should have been extinct by now, even as many of the lower species have disappeared.

Prophets and *avatars* have also taught the lesson of *ahimsa* more or less. Not one of them has professed to teach *himsa*. And how should it be otherwise? *Himsa* does not need to be taught. Man as animal is violent, but as Spirit is non-violent. The moment he awakes to the Spirit within, he cannot remain violent. Either he progresses towards *ahimsa* or rushes to his doom. That is why the prophets and *avatars* have taught the lessons of truth, harmony, brotherhood, justice, etc. — all attributes of *ahimsa*.

And yet violence seems to persist, even to the extent of thinking people like the correspondent regarding it as the final weapon. But as I have shown history and experience are against him.

If we believe that mankind has steadily progressed towards *ahimsa*, it follows that it has to progress towards it still further. Nothing in this world is static, everything is kinetic. If there is no progression, then there is inevitable retrogression. No one can remain without the eternal cycle, unless it be God Himself. — *H*, 11-8-40, 245.

Consequence of the Recognition of that Law

78. I have found that life persists in the midst of destruction and therefore there must be a higher law than that of destruction. Only under that law would a well-ordered society be intelligible and life worth living. And if that is the law of life, we have to work it out in daily life. Whenever there are jars, wherever you are confronted with an opponent conquer him with love — In this crude manner I have worked it out in my life. That does not mean that all my difficulties are solved. Only I have found that this law of love has answered as the law of destruction has never done.

It is not that I am incapable of anger, for instance, but I succeed on almost all occasions to keep my feelings under control. Whatever may be the result, there is always in me conscious struggle for following the law of non-violence deliberately and ceaselessly. Such a struggle leaves one stronger for it. The more I work at this law, the more I feel the delight in life, the delight in the scheme of the universe. It gives me a peace and a meaning of the mysteries of nature that I have no power to describe. — *YI*, 1-10-31, 286.

79. When an appeal to man is made to copy or study nature, he is not invited to follow what the reptiles do or even the king of the forest does. He has to study man's nature at its best, i.e. I presume his regenerate nature, whatever it may be. Perhaps it requires considerable effort to know what regenerate nature, is. — *H*, 4-4-36, 61.

80. Q. Why can't you see that whilst there is possession it must be defended against all odds? Therefore your insistence that violence should be eschewed in all circumstances is utterly unworkable and absurd. I think non-violence is possible only for select individuals.

A. This question has been answered often enough in some form or other in these columns as also in those of *Young India*. But it is an evergreen. I must answer it as often as it is put, especially when it comes from an earnest seeker as this one does. I claim that even now, though the social structure is not based on a conscious acceptance of

non-violence, all the world over mankind lives and men retain their possessions on the sufference of one another. If they had not done so, only the fewest and the most ferocious would have survived. But such is not the case. Families are bound together by ties of love, and so are groups in the so-called civilized society called nations. Only they do not recognize the supremacy of the law of non-violence. It follows, therefore, that they have not investigated its vast possibilities. Hitherto out of sheer inertia, shall I say, we have taken it for granted that complete non-violence is possible only for the few who take the vow of non-possession and the allied abstinences. Whilst it is true that the votaries alone can carry on research work and declare from time to time the new possibilities of the great eternal law governing man, if it is a law, it must hold good for all. The many failures we see are not of the law but of the followers, many of whom do not even know that they are under that law willynilly. When a mother dies for her child she unknowingly obeys the law. I have been pleading for the past fifty years for a conscious acceptance of the law and its zealous practice even in the face of failures. Fifty year's work has shown marvellous results and strengthened my faith. I do claim that by constant practice we shall come to a state of things when lawful possession will commend universal and voluntary respect. No doubt such possession will not be tainted. It will not be an insolent demonstration of the inequalities that surround us everywhere. Nor need the problem of unjust and unlawful possession appall the votary of non-violence. He has at his disposal the non-violent weapon of *Satyagraha* and non-cooperation which hitherto has been found to be a complete substitute of violence whenever it has been applied honestly in sufficient measure. I have never claimed to present the complete science of non-violence. It does not lend itself to such treatment. So far as I know no single physical science does, not even the very exact science of mathemetics. I am but a seeker, and I have fellow seekers like the questioner whom I invite to accompany me in the very difficult but equally fascinating search. — *H*, 22-2-42, 48.

Life is Unity

81. I claim that human mind or human society is not divided into watertight compartments called social, political and religious. All act and react upon one another. — *YI*, 2-3-22, 131.

82. I do not believe that the spiritual law works on a field of its own. On the contrary, it expresses itself only through the ordinary activities of life. It thus affects the economic, the social and the political fields. — *YI*, 3-9-25, 304.

Service to God and Man

83. Man's ultimate aim is the realization of God, and all his activities, social, political, religious, have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God. The immediate service of all human beings becomes a necessary part of the endeavour, simply because the only way to find God is to see Him in His creation and be one with it. This can only be done by service of all. I am a part and parcel of the whole, and I cannot find Him apart from the rest of humanity. My countrymen are my nearest neighbours. They have become so helpless, so resourceless, so inert that I must concentrate myself on serving them. If I could persuade myself that I should find Him in a Himalayan cave I would proceed there immediately. But I know that I cannot find Him apart from humanity. — *H*, 29-8-36, 226.

84. My creed is service of God and therefore of humanity. — *YI*, 23-10-24, 350.

85. To serve without desire is to favour not others, but ourselves, even as in discharging a debt we serve only ourselves, lighten our burden and fulfil our duty. Again, not only the good, but all of us are bound to place our resources at the disposal of humanity. The duty of renunciation differentiates mankind from the beast. — *YM*, 81.

86. Man becomes great exactly in the degree in which he works for the welfare of his fellow-men. — *ER*, 56.

The Oneness of Man

87. I believe in absolute oneness of God and therefore also of humanity. What though we have many bodies? We

have but one soul. The rays of the sun are many through refraction. But they have the same source. — *YI*, 25-9-24, 313.

88. I do not believe that an individual may gain spiritually and those that surround him suffer. I believe in *advaita*. I believe in the essential unity of man and for that matter of all that lives. Therefore I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him and, if one man falls, the whole world falls to that extent. — *YI*, 4-12-24, 398.

89. There is not a single virtue which aims at, or is content with, the welfare of the individual alone. Conversely, there is not a single moral offence which does not, directly or indirectly, affect many others besides the actual offender. Hence, whether an individual is good or bad is not merely his own concern, but really the concern of the whole community, nay, of the whole world. — *ER*, 55.

90. I subscribe to the belief or the philosophy that all life in its essence is one, and that the humans are working consciously or unconsciously towards the realization of that identity. This belief requires a living faith in a living God who is the ultimate arbiter of our fate. Without Him not a blade of grass moves. — *GC*, 88.

Individualism

91. The individual is the one supreme consideration. — *YI*, 13-11-24, 378.

92. I look upon an increase of the power of the State with the greatest fear, because, although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress. — *MR*, 1935, 413.

93. A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history. — *H*, 19-11-38, 343.

Man above Institutions

94. Man and his deed are two distinct things. It is quite proper to resist and attack a system, but to resist and attack its author is tantamount to resisting and attacking

oneself. For we are all tarred with the same brush, and are children of one and the same Creator, and as such the divine powers within us are infinite. To slight a single human being is to slight those divine powers, and thus to harm not only that being but with him the whole world. — *Auto*, 337.

95. I have discovered, that man is superior to the system he propounded. And so I feel, that Englishmen as individuals, are infinitely better than the system they have evolved as a corporation. — *YI*, 13-7-21, 221.

Faith in Man

96. I refuse to suspect human nature. It will, is bound to respond to any noble and friendly action. — *YI*, 4-8-20, *Tagore*, 559.

97. My proposal for British withdrawal is as much in Britain's interest as India's. Your difficulty arises from your disinclination to believe that Britain can never do justice voluntarily. My belief in the capacity of non-violence rejects the theory of permanent inelasticity of human nature. — *H*, 7-6-42, 177.

98. In the application of the method of non-violence, one must believe in the possibility of every person, however depraved, being reformed under humane and skilled treatment. — *H*, 22-2-42, 49.

99. When I was a little child, there used to be two blind performers in Rajkot. One of them was a musician. When he played on his instrument, his fingers swept the strings with an unerring instinct and everybody listened spell-bound to his playing. Similarly there are chords in every human heart. If we only know how to strike the right chord, we bring out the music. — *H*, 27-5-39, 136.

Reason and the Heart

100. Every formula of every religion has in this age of reason, to submit to the test of reason and universal assent. — *YI*, 26-2-25, 74.

101. Rationalists are admirable beings, rationalism is a hideous monster when it claims for itself omnipotence.

Attribution of omnipotence to reason is as bad a piece of idolatry as is worship of stock and stone believing it to be God. I plead not for the suppression of reason, but for a due recognition of that in us which sanctifies reason. — *YI*, 14-10-26, 359.

102. I have come to this fundamental conclusion that if you want something really important to be done, you must not merely satisfy reason, you must move the heart also. The appeal of reason is more to the head but the penetration of the heart comes from suffering. It opens up the inner understanding in man. — *YI*, 5-11-31, 341.

103. But He is no God who merely satisfies the intellect if He ever does. God to be God must rule the heart and transform it. — *YI*, 11-10-28, 340.

No Room for Unintelligence anywhere

104. Man alone can worship God with knowledge and understanding. Where devotion to God is void of understanding, there can be no true salvation, and without salvation there can be no true happiness. — *GH*, 129.

105. Truth and non-violence are not for the dense. Pursuit of them is bound to result in an all-round growth of the body, mind and heart. If this does not follow, either truth and non-violence are untrue or we are untrue, and since the former is impossible, the latter will be the only conclusion. — *H*, 8-5-37, 98.

106. You must know that a true practice of *ahimsa* means also in one who practises it the keenest intelligence and wide-awake conscience. — *H*, 8-9-40, 274.

107. Swaraj is for the awakened, not for the sleepy and the ignorant. — *H*, 28-1-39, 437.

108. In every branch of reform constant study giving one a mastery over one's subject is necessary. Ignorance is at the root of failures, partial or complete, of all reform movements whose merits are admitted, for every project masquerading under the name of reform is not necessarily worthy of being so designated. — *H*, 24-4-37, 84.

109. A handicraft plied merely mechanically can be as cramping to the mind and soul as any other pursuit taken

up mechanically. An unintelligent effort is like a corpse from which the spirit has departed. — *H*, 3-7-37, 161.

Idealism

110. The virtue of an ideal consists in its boundlessness. But although religious ideals must thus from their very nature remain unattainable by imperfect human beings, although by virtue of their boundlessness they may seem ever to recede farther and farther away from us, the nearer we go to them, still they are closer to us than our very hands and feet because we are more certain of their reality and truth than even our own physical being. This faith in one's ideals constitutes true life, in fact, it is man's all in all. — *YI*, 22-11-28, 391.

111. The goal ever recedes from us. The greater the progress the greater the recognition of our unworthiness. Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment. Full effort is full victory. — *YI*, 9-3-22, 141.

112. We need not be afraid of ideals or of reducing them to practice to the uttermost. — *Nat*, 355.

113. I was in the midst of a population which would not kill wild animals that daily destroy their crops. Before the Sardar threw the whole of his tremendous influence into the campaign of the destruction of rats and fleas, the people of the Borsad Taluka had not destroyed a single rat or flea. (These were plague-stricken — N. K. B). But they could not resist the Sardar to whom they owed much, and Dr. Bhaskar Patel was allowed to carry on wholesale destruction of rats and fleas. I was in daily touch with what was going on in Borsad.

The Sardar had invited me naturally to endorse what had been done. For the work had still to continue, though henceforth with the people's unaided effort. Therefore, in order to emphasize my endorsement, I redeclared in the clearest possible terms my implicit belief in *ahimsa*, i. e. sacredness and kinship of all life.

But why this contradiction between belief and action? Contradiction is undoubtedly there. Life is an aspiration. Its mission is to strive after perfection which is self-reali-

zation. The ideal must not be lowered because of our weaknesses or imperfections. I am painfully conscious of both in me. The silent cry goes out to Truth to help me to remove these weaknesses and imperfections of mine. I own my fear of snakes, scorpions, lions, tigers, pleague-stricken rats and fleas, even as I must own fear of evil-looking robbers and murderers. I know that I ought not to fear any of them. But this is no intellectual feat. It is a feat of the heart. It needs more than a heart of oak to shed all fear except the fear of God. I could not in any weakness ask the people of Borsad not to kill deadly rats and fleas. But I knew that it was a concession to human weakness.

Nevertheless there is that difference between a belief in *ahimsa* and a belief in *himsa* which there is between north and south, life and death. One who hooks his fortunes to *ahimsa*, the law of love, daily lessens the circle of destruction and to that extent promotes life and love; he who swears by *himsa*, the law of hate, daily widens the circle of destruction and to that extent promotes death and hate. Though, before the people of Borsad, I endorsed the destruction of rats and fleas, my own kith and kin, I preached to them without adulteration the grand doctrine of the eternal Law of Love of all Life. Though I may fail to carry it out to the full in this life, my faith in it shall abide. Every failure brings me nearer the realization. —*H*, 22-6-35.

The Age of Miracles

114. It is open to anyone to say that human nature has not been known to rise to such height. But if we have made unexpected progress in physical sciences, why may we do less in the science of the soul ? —*H*, 14-5-38, 114.

115. In this age of wonders no one will say that a thing or idea is worthless because it is new. To say it is impossible because it is difficult, is again not in consonance with the spirit of the age. Things undreamt of are daily being seen, the impossible is ever becoming possible. We are constantly being astonished these days at the amazing discoveries in the field of violence. But I maintain that far

more undreamt of and seemingly impossible discoveries will be made in the field of non-violence. — *H*. 25-8-40, 260.

Hatred can Never Yield Good

116. Brute force has been the ruling factor in the world for thousands of years, and mankind has been reaping its bitter harvest all along, as he who runs may read. There is little hope of anything good coming out of it in the future. If light can come out of darkness, then alone can love emerge from hatred. *SA*, 289.

117. It is my firm conviction that nothing enduring can be built upon violence. — *YI*, 15-11-28, 381

Non-violence

118. (1) Non-violence implies as complete self-purification as is humanly possible.

(2) Man for man the strength of non-violence is in exact proportion to the ability, not the will, of the non-violent person to inflict violence.

(3) Non-violence is without exception superior to violence, i. e., the power at the disposal of a non-violent person is always greater than he would have if he was violent.

(4) There is no such thing as defeat in non-violence. The end of violence is surest defeat.

(5) The ultimate end of non-violence is surest victory if such a term may be used of non-violence. In reality where there is no sense of defeat, there is no sense of victory. — *H*. 12-10-35, 276.

119. The only condition of a successful use of this force is a recognition of the existence of the soul as apart from the body and its permanent nature. And this recognition must amount to a living faith and not mere intellectual grasp. — *Nat*. 166.

Consequences of Non-violence

120. Q. Is love or non-violence compatible with possession or exploitation in any shape or form?

A. Love and exclusive possession can never go together. — *MR*, 1935, 412.

121. Military force is inconsistent with soul-force. Frightfulness, exploitation of the weak, immoral gains, insatiable pursuit after enjoyments of the flesh are utterly inconsistent with soul-force. — *YI*, 6-5-26, 164.

122. The principle of non-violence necessitates complete abstention from exploitation in any form.

123. Rural economy as I have conceived it eschews exploitation altogether, and exploitation is the essence of violence. — *H*, 4-11-39, 331.

124. No man could be actively non-violent and not rise against social injustice no matter where it occurred. *H*, 20-4-40, 97.

Non-violence always Applicable

125. Non-violence is a universal principle and its operation is not limited by a hostile environment. Indeed, its efficacy can be tested only when it acts in the midst of and in spite of opposition. Our non-violence would be a hollow thing and nothing worth, if it depended for its success on the goodwill of the authorities. (Here, reference is made to the British Government in India). *H*, 12-11-38, 326.

126. Truth and non-violence are no cloistered virtues but applicable as much in the forum and the legislatures as in the market place. *H*, 8-5-37, 98.

127. Some friends have told me that truth and non-violence have no place in politics and worldly affairs. I do not agree. I have no use for them as a means of individual salvation. Their introduction and application in everyday life has been my experiment all along. — *ABP*, 30-6-44.

128. We have to make truth and non-violence, not matters for mere individual practice but for practice by groups and communities and nations. That at any rate is my dream. I shall live and die in trying to realize it. My faith helps me to discover new truths every day. *Ahimsa* is the attribute of the soul, and therefore, to be practised by everybody in all the affairs of life. If it cannot be practised in all departments, it has no practical value. — *H*, 2-3-40, 23.

The Meaning of Non-resistance

129. Hitherto the word 'revolution' has been connected with violence and has as such been condemned by established authority. But the movement of Non-cooperation, if it may be considered a revolution, is not an armed revolt; it is an evolutionary revolution, it is a bloodless revolution. The movement is a revolution of thought, of spirit. Non-co-operation is a process of purification, and, as such, it constitutes a revolution in one's ideas. Its suppression, therefore, would amount to cooperation by coercion. Orders to kill the movement will be orders to destroy, or interfere with, the introduction of the spinning wheel, to prohibit the campaign of temperance, and an incitement, therefore, to violence. For any attempt to compel people by indirect methods to wear foreign clothes, to patronize drink-shops would certainly exasperate them. But our success will be assured when we stand even this exasperation and incitement. We must not retort. Inaction on our part will kill Government madness. For violence flourishes on response, either by submission to the will of the violator, or by counter-violence. My strong advice to every worker is to segregate this evil Government by strict non-cooperation, not even to talk or speak about it, but having recognized the evil, to cease to pay homage to it by cooperation. — *YI*, 30-3-21, 97.

130. Passive resistance is a method of securing rights by personal suffering; it is the reverse of resistance by arms. When I refuse to do a thing that is repugnant to my conscience, I use soul-force. For instance, the Government of the day has passed a law which is applicable to me. I do not like it. If by using violence I force the Government to repeal the law, I am employing what may be termed body-force. If I do not obey the law and accept the penalty for its breach, I use soul-force. It involves sacrifice of self.

Everybody admits that sacrifice of self is infinitely superior to sacrifice of others. Moreover, if this kind of force is used in a cause that is unjust, only the person using it suffers. He does not make others suffer for his

mistakes. Men have before now done many things which were subsequently found to have been wrong. No man can claim that he is absolutely in the right or that a particular thing is wrong because he thinks so, but it is wrong for him so long as that is his deliberate judgment. It is therefore meet that he should not do that which he knows to be wrong, and suffer the consequence whatever it may be. This is the key to the use of soul-force. — *IHR*, 45.

131. That is the way of *satyagraha* or the way of non-resistance to evil. It is the aseptic method in which the physician allows the poison to work itself out by setting in motion all the natural forces and letting them have full play.* — *H.*, 9-7-38, 173.

132. I accept the interpretation of *ahimsa*, namely, that it is not merely a negative state of harmlessness but it is a positive state of love, of doing good even to the evil-doer. But it does not mean helping the evil-doer to continue the wrong or tolerating it by passive acquiescence. On the contrary, love, the active state of *ahimsa*, requires you to resist the wrongdoer by dissociating yourself from him even though it may offend him or injure him physically. — *YI*, 25-8-20, *Tagore*, 322

Evolution and Revolution

133. Q. Have you studied history and noted the progress of nations? Have you at all noted that progress is made by growth and gradual development; and not by revolution and destruction? Do you ever notice how God works through nature, that the life of plants and animals grows by slow advance, by evolution, not revolution? Do you ever watch the sky and the movement of the stars? The suns and systems which continue through the ages can scarcely be seen to move at all. To ascend a mountain the climber has to take slow and painful steps one after another. To descend quickly he need only step over the precipice and he is at the bottom in a few seconds.

* Non-cooperation compared to homeopathic treatment — *YI*, 9-2-22, 85.

A. The nations have progressed both by evolution and revolution. The one is as necessary as the other. Death, which is an eternal verity, is revolution as birth and after is slow and steady evolution. Death is as necessary for man's growth as life itself. God is the greatest Revolutionist the world has ever known or will know. He sends deluges. He sends storms where a moment ago there was calm. He levels down mountains which he builds with exquisite care and infinite patience. I do watch the sky and it fills me with awe and wonder. In the serene blue sky, both of India and England, I have seen clouds gathering and bursting with a fury which has struck me dumb. History is more a record of wonderful revolutions than the so-called ordered progress — no history more so than the English. And I beg to inform the correspondent that I have seen people trudging slowly up mountains and have also seen men shooting up the air through great heights.
YI, 2-2-22, 78.

Inward Freedom and Outward Expression

134. The outward freedom that we shall attain will only be in exact proportion to the inward freedom to which we may have grown at a given moment. And if this is the correct view of freedom, our chief energy must be concentrated upon achieving reform from within.
YI, 1-11-28, 363.

135. The Devil succeeds only by receiving help from his fellows. He always takes advantage of the weakest spots in our natures in order to gain mastery over us. Even so does the Government retain control over us through our weaknesses or vices. And if we could render ourselves proof against its machinations, we must remove our weaknesses. It is for that reason that I have called Non-co-operation a process of purification. As soon as that process is completed, this government must fall to pieces for want of the necessary environment, just as mosquitoes cease to haunt a place whose cesspools are filled up and dried.
YI, 19-1-21, 21.

The Nature of Swaraj and the Meaning of Freedom

136. The first step to Swaraj lies in the individual. The great truth: 'As with the individual so with the universe', is applicable here as elsewhere. — *Nat*, 409.

137. Government over self is the truest Swaraj, it is synonymous with *moksha* or salvation. — *YI*, 8-12-20, *Tagore*, 1099.

138. Swaraj of a people means the sum total of the Swaraj (self-rule) of individuals. — *H*, 25-3-39, 64.

139. Self-government depends entirely upon our own internal strength, upon our ability to fight against the heaviest odds. Indeed, self-government which does not require that continuous striving to attain it and to sustain it, is not worth the name. I have therefore endeavoured to show both in word and deed, that political self-government — that is self-government for a large number of men and women, is no better than individual self-government, and therefore, it is to be attained by precisely the same means that are required for individual self-government or self-rule. — *Ceylon*, 93.

140. Evolution is always experimental. All progress is gained through mistakes and their rectification. No good comes fully fashioned, out of God's hand, but has to be carved out through repeated experiments and repeated failures by ourselves. This is the law of individual growth. The same law controls social and political evolution also. The right to err, which means the freedom to try experiments, is the universal condition of all progress. — *Ganesh* (1921), 245.

The End and the Means

141. They say 'means are after all means.' I would say 'means are after all everything.' As the means so the end. There is no wall of separation between means and end. Indeed the Creator has given us control (and that too very limited) over means, none over the end. Realization of the goal is in exact proportion to that of the means. This is a proposition that admits of no exception. — *YI*, 17-7-24, 236.

142. The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree. —*IHR*, 39.

143. Once I said 'In spinning wheel lies Swaraj', next I said 'In prohibition lies Swaraj'. In the same way I would say in cent per cent *Swadeshi* lies Swaraj. Of course, it is like the blind men describing the elephant. All of them are right and yet not wholly right. —*H*, 28-9-34, 259.

144. It seems that the attempt made to win Swaraj is Swaraj itself. The faster we run towards it, the longer seems to be the distance to be traversed. The same is the case with all ideals. —*Nat*, 685.

145. Though you have emphasized the necessity of a clear statement of the goal, but having once determined it, I have never attached importance to its repetition. The clearest possible definition of the goal and its appreciation would fail to take us there, if we do not know and utilize the means of achieving it. I have, therefore, concerned myself principally with the conservation of the means and their progressive use. I know if we can take care of them attainment of the goal is assured. I feel too that our progress towards the goal will be in exact proportion to the purity of our means.

This method may appear to be long, perhaps too long, but I am convinced that it is the shortest. —*ABP*, 17-9-33.

Rights and Duties

146. The true source of rights is duty. If we all discharge our duties, rights will not be far to seek. If leaving duties unperformed we run after rights, they will escape us like a will o' the wisp. The more we pursue them, the farther will they fly. The same teaching has been embodied by Krishna in the immortal words: 'Action alone is thine. Leave thou the fruit severely alone.' Action is duty: fruit is the right. —*YI*, 8-1-25, 15.

The Greatest Good of All

147. A votary of *ahimsa* cannot subscribe to the utilitarian formula (of the greatest good of the greatest

number). He will strive for the greatest good of all and die in the attempt to realize the ideal. He will therefore be willing to die, so that the others may live. He will serve himself with the rest, by himself dying. The greatest good of all inevitably includes the good of the greatest number, and therefore, he and the utilitarian will converge in many points in their career but there does come a time when they must part company, and even work in opposite directions. The utilitarian to be logical will never sacrifice himself. The absolutist will even sacrifice himself. *YI*, 9-12-26, 432.

True Civilization and Self-restraint

148. Civilization, in the real sense of the term, consists not in the multiplication, but in the deliberate and voluntary restriction of wants. This alone promotes real happiness and contentment, and increases the capacity for service. *YM*, 36.

149. Q. But some comforts may be necessary even for man's spiritual advancement. One could not advance himself by identifying himself with the discomfort and squalor of the villager.

A. A certain degree of physical harmony and comfort is necessary, but above that level, it becomes a hindrance instead of help. Therefore the ideal of creating an unlimited number of wants and satisfying them seems to be delusion and a snare. The satisfaction of one's physical needs, even the intellectual needs of one's narrow self, must meet at a point a dead stop, before it degenerates into physical and intellectual voluptuousness. A man must arrange his physical and cultural circumstances so that they may not hinder him in his service of humanity, on which all his energies should be concentrated. — *H*, 29-8-36, 226.

150. As long as you derive inner help and comfort from anything, you should keep it. If you were to give it up in a mood of self-sacrifice or out of a stern sense of duty, you would continue to want it back, and that unsatisfied want would make trouble for you. Only give up a thing when you want some other condition so much that the thing no longer has any attraction for you, or when it seems

to interfere with that which is more greatly desired. — *Vishva-Bharati Quarterly,* New Series II, part II, 46.

Economic Ideal

151. Ideas derived by Gandhi from Ruskin's *Unto this Last* in the year 1904 :

(1) That the good of the individual is contained in the good of all.

(2) That a lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's, inasmuch as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work.

(3) That a life of labour, i. e. the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman is the life worth living. — *Auto,* 365.

152. Every human being has a right to live, and therefore to find the wherewithal to feed himself and where necessary, to clothe and house himself. — *Nat.* 350.

153. According to me the economic constitution of India and for the matter of that of the world, should be such that no one under it should suffer from want of food and clothing. In other words everybody should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make the two ends meet. And this ideal can be universally realized only if the means of production of the elementary necessaries of life remain in the control of the masses. These should be freely available to all as God's air and water are or ought to be; they should not be made a vehicle of traffic for the exploitation of others. Their monopolization by any country, nation or group of persons would be unjust. The neglect of this simple principle is the cause of the destitution that we witness today not only in this unhappy land but in other parts of the world too. — *YI,* 15-11-28, 381.

154. Violence is no monopoly of any one party. I know Congressmen who are neither socialists nor communists, but who are frankly devotees of the cult of violence. Contrariwise, I know socialists and communists who will not hurt a fly but who believe in the universal ownership of the instruments of production. I rank myself as one among them. — *H,* 10-12-38, 366.

Economics and Morality

155. That economics is untrue which ignores or disregards moral values. The extension of the law of non-violence in the domain of economics means nothing less than the introduction of moral values as a factor to be considered in regulating international commerce. — *YI*, 26-12-24, 421.

156. True economics never militates against the highest ethical standard, just as all true ethics to be worth its name, must at the same time be also good economics. An economics that inculcates Mammon worship, and enables the strong to amass wealth at the expense of the weak, is a false and dismal science. It spells death. True economics, on the other hand, stands for social justice, it promotes the good of all equally including the weakest, and is indispensable for decent life. — *H*, 9-10-37, 292.

The Social Ideal

157. I want to bring about an equalization of status. The working classes have all these centuries been isolated and relegated to a lower status. They have been *shoodras*, and the word has been interpreted to mean an inferior status. I want to allow no differentiation between the son of a weaver, of an agriculturist and of a schoolmaster. — *H*, 15-1-38, 416.

Political Ideal

158. To me political power is not an end but one of the means of enabling people to better their condition in every department of life. Political power means capacity to regulate national life through national representatives. If national life becomes so perfect as to become self-regulated, no representation becomes necessary. There is then a state of enlightened anarchy. In such a state everyone is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour. In the ideal state therefore, there is no political power because there is no State. But the ideal is never fully realized in life. Hence the classical statement of Thoreau that that government is best which governs the least. — *YI*, 2-7-31, 162.

159. I look upon an increase in the power of the State with the greatest fear, because, although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress.

The State represents violence in a concentrated and organized form. The individual has a soul, but as the State is a soulless machine, it can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its very existence.

It is my firm conviction that if the State suppressed capitalism by violence, it will be caught in the coils of violence itself and fail to develop non-violence at any time.

What I would personally prefer, would be, not a centralization of power in the hands of the State but an extention of the sense of trusteeship; as in my opinion, the violence of private ownership is less injurious than the violence of the State. However, if it is unavoidable, I would support a minimum of State-ownership.

What I disapprove of is an organization based on force which a State is. Voluntary organization there must be. — *MR*, 1935, 412.

Democracy

160. Let there be no manner of doubt that Swaraj established by non-violent means will be different in kind from the Swaraj that can be established by armed rebellion. — *YI*, 2-3-22, 130.

161. Violent means will give violent Swaraj. That would be a menace to the world and India herself. — *YI*, 17-7-24, 236.

162. I hold that democracy cannot be evolved by forcible methods. The spirit of democracy cannot be imposed from without. It has to come from within. — *Sita*, 982.

163. I read Carlyle's *History of the French Revolution* while I was in prison, and Pandit Jawaharlal has told me something about the Russian Revolution. But it is my conviction that inasmuch as these struggles were fought with the weapon of violence, they failed to realize the democratic ideal. In the democracy which I have envisaged,

a democracy established by non-violence, there will be equal freedom for all. Everybody will be his own master. — *GC*, 173.

164. I believe that true democracy can only be an outcome of non-violence. The structure of a world federation can be raised only on a foundation of non-violence, and violence will have to be totally given up in world affairs. *GC*, 175.

National Independence

165. I live for India's freedom and would die for it, because it is part of Truth. Only a free India can worship the true God. I work for India's freedom because my *swadeshi* teaches me that being born in it and having inherited her culture, I am fittest to serve *her* and *she* has a prior claim to my service. But my patriotism is not exclusive; it is calculated not only not to hurt another nation but to benefit all in the true sense of the word. India's freedom as conceived by me can never be a menace to the world. — *YI*, 3-4-24, 109.

166. We want freedom for our country, but not at the expense or exploitation of others, not so as to degrade other countries. I do not want the freedom of India if it means the extinction of England or the disappearance of Englishmen. I want the freedom of my country so that other countries may learn something from my free country, so that the resources of my country might be utilized for the benefit of mankind. Just as the cult of patriotism teaches us today that the individual has to die for the family, the family has to die for the village, the village for the district, the district for the province, and the province for the country, even so, a country has to be free in order that it may die, if necessary, for the benefit of the world. My love therefore of nationalism, or my idea of nationalism, is that my country may become free, that if need be, the whole country may die, so that the human races may live. There is no room for race-hatred there. Let that be our nationalism. — *IV*,170.

The International Ideal

167. My religion has no geographical limits. If I have a living faith in it, it will transcend my love for India herself. — *YI*, 11-8-20, *Tagore*, 714.

168. Isolated independence is not the goal of the world States. It is voluntary interdependence. — *YI*, 17-7-24, 236.

169. There is no limit to extending our services to our neighbours across State-made frontiers. God never made those frontiers. —*YI*, 31-12-31, 427.

Freedom of the Self and of the Nation

170. I do not realize that I am 'staking a whole nation for self-evolution.' For self-evolution is wholly consistent with a nation's evolution. A nation cannot advance without the units of which it is composed advancing, and conversely no individual can advance without the nation of which he is a part also advancing. — *YI*, 26-3-31, 50.

171. The motto of the Gujarat Vidyapith is सा विद्या या विमुक्तये। It means : That is knowledge which is designed for salvation. On the principle that the greater includes the less, national independence or material freedom is included in the spiritual. The knowledge gained in educational institutions must therefore at least teach the way and lead to such freedom. — *YI*, 20-3-30, 100.

His Own Mission

172. I have not conceived my mission to be that of a knight-errant wandering everywhere to deliver people from difficult situations. My humble occupation has been to show people how they can solve their own difficulties. —*H*, 28-6-42, 201.

173. My work will be finished if I succeed in carrying conviction to the human family, that every man or woman, however weak in body, is the guardian of his or her self-respect and liberty. This defence avails, though the whole world may be against the individual resister. —*HS*, 6-8-44.

Character of His Leadership

174. You will see that my influence, great as it may appear to outsiders, is strictly limited. I may have considerable

influence to conduct a campaign for redress of popular grievance because people are ready and need a helper. But, I have no influence to direct people's energy in a channel in which they have no interest. — *H*, 26-7-42, 242.

Why Politics ?

175. If I seem to take part in politics, it is only because politics encircle us today like the coil of a snake from which one cannot get out, no matter how much one tries. I wish therefore to wrestle with the snake. — *YI*, 12-5-20, *Tagore*, 1069.

176. My work of social reform was in no way less or subordinate to political work. The fact is, that when I saw that to a certain extent my social work would be impossible without the help of political work, I took to the latter and only to the extent that it helped the former. I must therefore confess that work of social reform or self-purification of this nature is a hundred times dearer to me than what is called purely political work. — *YI*, 6-8-31, 203.

177. My life is one indivisible whole, and all my activities run into one another, and they all have their rise in my insatiable love of mankind. —*H*, 2-3-34, 24.

A Practical Idealist

178. In dealing with living entities, the dry syllogistic method leads not only to bad logic but sometimes to fatal logic. For if you miss even a tiny factor — and you never have control over all the factors that enter into dealings with human beings,— your conclusion is likely to be wrong. Therefore, you never reach the final truth, you only reach an approximation; and that too if you are extra careful in your dealings. — *H*, 14-8-37, 212.

179. For me, the Law of complete Love is the Law of my being. Each time I fail, my effort shall be all the more determined for my failure. But I am *not* preaching that final law through the Congress or the Khilafat. I know that any such attempt is foredoomed to failure. To expect a whole mass of men and women to obey that law all at once, is not to know its workings. — *YI*, 9-3-22, 141.

180. I adhere to the opinion that I did well to present to the Congress non-violence as an expedient. I could not have done otherwise, if I was to introduce it into politics. In South Africa too I introduced it as an expedient. It was successful there because resisters were a small number in a compact area and therefore easily controlled. Here we had numberless persons scattered over a huge country. The result was that they could not be easily controlled or trained. And yet it is a marvel the way they have responded. They might have responded much better and shown far better results. But I have no sense of disappointment in me over the results obtained. If I had started with men who accepted non-violence as a creed, I might have ended with myself. Imperfect as I am, I started with imperfect men and women and sailed on an uncharted ocean. Thank God, that though the boat has not reached its haven, it has proved fairly storm-proof. --*H*, 12-4-42, 116.

181. God has blessed me with the mission to place non-violence before the nation for adoption. For better or for worse the Congress has adopted it, and for the past nineteen years the Congress, admittedly the most popular and powerful organization, has consistently and to the best of its ability tried to act up to it.

I hope the learned critic does not wish to suggest that as the Congress did not accept my position, I should have dissociated myself entirely from the Congress and refused to guide it. My association enables the Congress to pursue the technique of corporate non-violent action. — *H*, 2-12-39, 357.

182. I would not serve the cause of non-violence, if I deserted my best co-workers because they could not follow me in an extended application of non-violence. I therefore remain with them in the faith that their departure from the non-violent method will be confined to the narrowest field and will be temporary. — *H*, 30-9-39, 289.

Personal

183. I lay claim to nothing exclusively divine in me. I do not claim prophetship. I am but a humble seeker

after Truth and bent upon finding It. I count no sacrifice too great for the sake of seeing God face to face. The whole of my activity whether it may be called social, political, humanitarian or ethical is directed to that end. And as I know that God is found more often in the lowliest of His creatures than in the high and mighty, I am struggling to reach the status of these. I cannot do so without their service. Hence my passion for the service of the suppressed classes. And as I cannot render this service without entering politics, I find myself in them. Thus I am no master, I am but a struggling, erring, humble servant of India and there-through, of humanity. — *YI*, 11-9-24, 298.

184. I have been a willing slave to this most exacting Master for more than half a century. His voice has been increasingly audible as years have rolled by. He has never forsaken me even in my darkest hour. He has saved me often against myself and left me not a vestige of independence. The greater the surrender to Him, the greater has been my joy. — *H*, 6-5-33, 4.

185. Q. Are you happy ?

A. Ah ! I can answer that question. I am perfectly happy.

Q. More happy than you were outside the village ?

A. I cannot say, for my happiness is not dependent on external circumstances. — *H*, 8-8-36, 201.

IV

GOSPEL OF WORK

The Sight of Poverty

186. He then took me to an open space in the very shadow of the hoary temple where were arranged in rows the famine-striken people. The life was ebbing away in them. They were living pictures of despair. You could count every rib. You could see every artery. There was no muscle, no flesh. Parched, crumpled skin and bone was all you could see. There was no lustre in their eyes. They seemed to want to die. They had no interest in anything save the handful of rice they got. They would not work for money. For love, perhaps! It almost seemed that they would condescend to eat and live if you would give them the handful of rice. It is the greatest tragedy I know of these men and women, our brothers and sisters, dying a slow torturing death. Theirs is an eternal compulsory fast. And as they break it occasionally with rice, they seem to mock us for the life we live. — *YI*, 31-10-24, 357.

187. True to his poetical instinct, the poet lives for the morrow and would have us do likewise. He presents to our admiring gaze the beautiful picture of the birds early in the morning singing hymns of praise as they soar into the sky. These birds have had their day's food and soared with rested wings, in whose veins new blood had flown during the previous night. But I have had the pain of watching birds who for want of strength could not be coaxed even into a flutter of their wings. The human bird under the Indian sky gets up weaker than when he pretended to retire. For millions it is an eternal vigil or an eternal trance. It is an indescribably painful state which has got to be experienced to be realized. I have found it impossible to soothe suffering patients with a song from Kabir. The hungry millions ask for one poem — invigorating food. They cannot be given it. They must earn it. And they can earn only by the sweat of their brow. — *YI*, 13-10-21, 326.

188. Imagine, therefore, what a calamity it must be to have 300 millions unemployed, several millions becoming degraded every day for want of employment, devoid of self-respect, devoid of faith in God. I may as well place before the dog over there the message of God as before those hungry millions who have no lustre in their eyes and whose only God is their bread. I can take before them a message of God only by taking the message of sacred work before them. It is good enough to talk of God whilst we are sitting here after a nice breakfast and looking forward to a nicer luncheon, but how am I to talk of God to the millions who have to go without two meals a day? To them God can only appear as bread and butter. – *YI*, 15-10-31, 310.

189. To a people famishing and idle, the only acceptable form in which God can dare appear is work and promise of food as wages. — *YI*, 13-10-21, 325.

No Question of Giving Alms

190. We should be ashamed of resting or having a square meal so long as there is one able-bodied man or woman without work or food. — *YI*, 6-10-21, 314.

191. My *ahimsa* would not tolerate the idea of giving a free meal to a healthy person who has not worked for it in some honest way, and if I had the power, I would stop every *sadavrata* where free meals are given. It has degraded the nation and it has encouraged laziness, idleness, hypocrisy and even crime. — *YI*, 13-8-25, 282.

192. Do not say you will maintain the poor on charity. Only two classes of people are entitled to charity and no one else — the *Brahmana* who possesses nothing and whose business it is to spread holy learning, and the cripple and the blind. The iniquitous system of giving doles to the able-bodied idle is going on to our eternal shame and humiliation, and it is to wipe out that shame that I am going about with the message of the Charkha up and down the whole country. — *YI*, 24-2-27, 58.

193. We may not be deceived by the wealth to be seen in the cities of India. It does not come from England or America. It comes from the blood of the poorest. There are

said to be seven lakhs of villages in India. Some of them have simply been wiped out. No one has any record of those thousands who have died of starvation and disease in Bengal, Karnatak and elsewhere. The Government registers can give no idea of what the village folk are going through. But being a villager myself, I know the condition in the villages. I know village economics. I tell you that the pressure from the top crushes those at the bottom.

All that is necessary is to get off their backs. — *ABP*, 30-6-44.

194. 'Why should I, who have no need to work for food, spin?' may be the question asked. Because I am eating what does not belong to me. I am living on the spoliation of my countrymen. Trace the course of every pice that finds its way into your pocket, and you will realize the truth of what I write......

I must refuse to insult the naked by giving them clothes they do not need, instead of giving them work which they sorely need. I will not commit the sin of becoming their patron, but on learning that I had assisted in impoverishing them, I would give them neither crumbs nor cast off clothing, but the best of my food and clothes and associate myself with them in work......

God created man to work for his food and said that those who ate without work were thieves. —*YI*, 13-10-21, 325.

The Gospel of Work

195. Service is not possible unless it is rooted in love or *ahimsa*. True love is boundless like the ocean and rising and swelling within one spreads itself out and crossing all boundaries and frontiers envelopes the whole world. This service is again impossible without bread labour, otherwise described in the *Gita* as *yajna*. It is only when a man or woman has done body labour for the sake of service that he or she has a right to live. — *YI*, 20-9-28, 320.

196. All natural and necessary work is easy. Only it requires constant practice to become perfect, and it needs plodding. Ability to plod is Swaraj. It is *yoga*. Nor need the reader be frightened of the monotony. Monotony is the

law of nature. Look at the monotonous manner in which the sun rises. And imagine the catastrophe that would befall the universe, if the sun became capricious and went in for a variety of pastime. But there is a monotony that sustains and a monotony that kills. The monotony of necessary occupations is exhilarating and life-giving. An artist never tires of his art. A spinner who has mastered the art, will certainly be able to do sustained work without fatigue. There is a music about the spindle which the practised spinner catches without fail. And when India has monotonously worked away at turning out Swaraj, she will have produced a thing of beauty which will be a joy for ever. But it cannot be without the spinning wheel. Therefore, the best national education for India is undoubtedly an intelligent handling of the spinning-wheel. *YI*, 18-8-21, 262.

197. In the last issue I have endeavoured to answer the objections raised by the Poet against spinning as a sacrament to be performed by all. I have done so in all humility and with the desire to convince the Poet and those who think like him. The reader will be interested in knowing that my belief is largely derived from the *Bhagavadgita*. I have quoted the relevant verses in the article itself. I give below Edwin Arnold's rendering of the verses from his *Song Celestial* for the benefit of those who do not read Sanskrit:

Work is more excellent than idleness;
  The body's life proceeds not, lacking work.
There is a task of holiness to do,
  Unlike world-binding toil, which bindeth not
The faithful soul; such earthly duty do
  Free from desire, and thou shalt well perform
Thy heavenly purpose. Spake Prajapati
  In the beginning, when all men were made,
And, with mankind, the sacrifice—"Do this!
  Work! Sacrifice! Increase and multiply
With sacrifice! This shall be Kamadhuk,
  Your 'Cow of Plenty', giving back her milk
Of all abundance. Worship the gods thereby;
  The gods shall yield ye grace. Those meats ye crave

The gods will grant to Labour, when it pays
    Tithes in the altar-flame. But if one eats
Fruits of the earth, rendering to kindly Heaven
    No gift of toil, that thief steals from his world."
Who eat of food after their sacrifice
    Are quit of fault, but they that spread a feast
All for themselves, eat sin and drink of sin.
    By food the living live; food comes of rain.
And rain comes by the pious sacrifice,
    And sacrifice is paid with tithes of toil;
Thus action is of Brahma, who is One,
    The Only, All-pervading; at all times
Present in sacrifice. He that abstains
    To help the rolling wheels of this great world,
Glutting his idle sense, lives a lost life,
    Shameful and vain.

Work here undoubtedly refers to physical labour, and work by way of sacrifice can only be work to be done by all for the common benefit. Such work, such sacrifice can only be spinning. I do not wish to suggest, that the author of the Divine Song had the spinning wheel in mind. He merely laid down a fundamental principle of conduct. And reading in and applying it to India I can only think of spinning as the fittest and most acceptable sacrificial body labour. I cannot imagine anything nobler or more national than that for, say, one hour in the day, we should all do the labour that the poor must do, and thus identify ourselves with them and through them with all mankind. I cannot imagine better worship of God than that in His name I should labour for the poor even as they do. The spinning wheel spells a more equitable distribution of the riches of the earth. — *YI*, 20-10-21, 329.

Bread Labour

198. The law, that to live man must work, first came home to me upon reading Tolstoy's writing on Bread labour. But even before that I had begun to pay homage to it after reading Ruskin's *Unto this Last*. The divine law, that man must earn his bread by labouring with his own hands, was

first stressed by a Russian writer named T. M. Bondaref. Tolstoy advertized it, and gave it wider publicity. In my view, the same principle has been set forth in the third chapter of the *Gita*, where we are told, that he who eats without offering sacrifice, eats stolen food. Sacrifice here can only mean Bread labour.

Reason too leads us to an identical conclusion. How can a man, who does not do body labour, have the right to eat? 'In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread', says the Bible. A millionaire cannot carry on for long, and will soon get tired of his life, if he rolls in his bed all day long, and is even helped to his food. He, therefore, induces hunger by exercise, and helps himself to the food he eats. If every one, whether rich or poor, has thus to take exercise in some shape or form, why should it not assume the form of productive, i. e., Bread labour? No one asks the cultivator to take breathing exercise or to work his muscles. And more than nine tenths of humanity lives by tilling the soil. How much happier, healthier and more peaceful would the world become, if the remaining tenth followed the example of the overwhelming majority, at least to the extent of labouring enough for their food! And many hardships, connected with agriculture, would be easily redressed, if such people took a hand in it. Again invidious distinctions of rank would be abolished, when every one without exception acknowledged the obligation of Bread labour. It is common to all the *varnas*. There is a world-wide conflict between capital and labour, and the poor envy the rich. If all worked for their bread, distinctions of rank would be obliterated; the rich would still be there, but they would deem themselves only trustees of their property, and would use it mainly in the public interest.

Bread labour is a veritable blessing to one who would observe Non-violence, worship Truth, and make the observance of *brahmacharya* a natural act. This labour can truly be related to agriculture alone. But at present at any rate, everybody is not in a position to take to it. A person can therefore spin or weave, or take up carpentry or smithery, instead of tilling the soil, always regarding agriculture however

to be the ideal. Every one must be his own scavenger. Evacuation is as necessary as eating; and the best thing would be for every one to dispose of his own waste. If this is impossible, each family should see to its own scavenging. I have felt for years, that there must be something radically wrong, where scavenging has been made the concern of a separate class in society. We have no historical record of the man, who first assigned the lowest status to this essential sanitary service. Whoever he was, he by no means did us a good. We should, from our very childhood, have the idea impressed upon our minds that we are all scavengers, and the easiest way of doing so is, for every one who has realized this, to commence Bread labour as a scavenger. Scavenging, thus intelligently taken up, will help one to a true appreciation of the equality of man. — *YM*, 50.

199. " Brahma created his people with the duty of sacrifice laid upon them and said, ' By this do you flourish. Let it be the fulfiller of all your desires,' . . . He who eats without performing this sacrifice eats stolen bread ", — thus says the *Gita*. ' Earn thy bread by the sweat of thy brow,' says the Bible. Sacrifices may be of many kinds. One of them may well be Bread labour. If all laboured for their bread and no more, then there would be enough food and enough leisure for all. Then there would be no cry of over-population, no disease and no such misery as we see around. Such labour will be the highest form of sacrifice. Men will no doubt do many other things either through their bodies or through their minds, but all this will be labour of love for the common good. There will then be no rich and no poor, none high and none low, no touchable and no untouchable.

This may be an unattainable ideal. But we need not, therefore, cease to strive for it. Even if without fulfilling the whole law of sacrifice, that is, the law of our being, we performed physical labour enough for our daily bread, we should go a long way towards the ideal.

If we did so, our wants would be minimized, our food would be simple. We should then eat to live, not live to eat. Let anyone who doubts the accuracy of this propostion try to sweat for his bread, he will derive the greatest

relish from the productions of his labour, improve his health and discover that many things he took were superfluities.

May not men earn their bread by intellectual labour? No. The needs of the body must be supplied by the body. 'Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's' perhaps applies here well.

Mere mental, that is, intellectual labour is for the soul and is its own satisfaction. It should never demand payment. In the ideal state, doctors, lawyers and the like will work solely for the benefit of society, not for self. Obedience to law of Bread labour will bring about a silent revolution in the structure of society. Men's triumph will consist in substituting the struggle for existence by the struggle for mutual service. The law of the brute will be replaced by the law of man.

Return to the villages means a definite voluntary recognition of the duty of Bread labour and all it connotes. But says the critic, 'Millions of India's children are today living in the villages and yet they are living a life of semi-starvation.' This, alas! is but too true. Fortunately we know that theirs is not voluntary obedience. They would perhaps shirk body labour if they could, and even rush to the nearest city if they could be accommodated in it. Compulsory obedience to a master is a state of slavery, willing obedience to one's father is the glory of sonship. Similarly compulsory obedience to the law of Bread labour breeds poverty, disease and discontent. It is a state of slavery. Willing obedience to it must bring contentment and health. And it is health which is real wealth, not pieces of silver and gold. The Village Industries Association is an experiment in willing Bread labour. —*H.* 29-6-35, 156.

200. (Addressed to the students of the Benares Hindu University)

Panditji has collected and has been still collecting lakhs and lakhs of rupees for you from Rajas and Maharajas. The money apparently comes from these wealthy Princes, but in reality it comes from the millions of our poor. For unlike Europe, the rich of our land grow rich at the expense of our villagers the bulk of whom have to go without a

square meal a day. The education that you receive today is thus paid for by the starving villagers who will never have the chance of such an education. It is your duty to refuse to have an education that is not within reach of the poor; but I do not ask that of you today. I ask you to render a slight return to the poor by doing a little *yajna* for them. For he who eats without doing his *yajna* steals his food, says the *Gita*. The *yajna* of our age and for us is the spinning wheel. Day in and day out I have been talking about it, writing about it. — *YI*. 20-1-27, 22.

The Spinning Wheel

201. There is, on the face of the earth, no other country that has the problem that India has of chronic starvation and slow death — a process of dehumanization. The solution must therefore be original. In trying to find it, we must discover the cause of the tremendous tragedy. These people are starving because there is chronic famine, due to floods or want of rains. They have no other occupation to fall back upon. They are therefore constantly idle. This idleness has persisted for so long that it has become a habit with them. Starvation and idleness are the normal condition of life for thousands of people. We may find remedies to prevent floods. That will take years. We may induce people to adopt better methods of cultivation That must take still more years. And when we have stopped inundations and have introduced among millions up to date cultivation, there will still be plenty of time left with the peasants if they will only work. But these improvements will take generations. How are all the starving millions to keep the wolf from the door meanwhile ? The answer is through the spinning wheel. — *YI*, 31-10-24, 357.

202. The only question therefore that a lover of India and humanity has to address himself to is how best to devise practical means of alleviating India's wretchedness and misery. No scheme of irrigation or other agricultural improvement that human ingenuity can conceive can deal with the vastly scattered population of India or provide work for masses of mankind who are constantly thrown out of employment.

Imagine a nation working only five hours a day on an average, and this not by choice but by force of circumstances, and you have a realistic picture of India. — *YI*, 3-11-21, 350.

203. At one time our national economics was this that just as we produced our own corn and consumed it, so did we produce our own cotton, spin it in our homes and wear the clothes woven by our weavers from our own yarn. The first part of this description is still true while the latter part has almost ceased to hold good. A man generally spends upon his clothing a tenth of what he spends upon his food; hence instead of distributing ten per cent of our income among ourselves, we send it to England or to our own mills. That means that we lose so much labour, and in the bargain spend money on our clothing and consequently suffer a two-fold loss. The result is that we stint ourselves in the matter of food in order to be able to spend on clothing, and sink to greater misery day by day. We are bound to perish if the twin industries of agriculture and spinning as well as weaving disappear from our homes or our villages. — *YI*, 8-1-25, 11.

204. Revival of the cottage industry, and not cottage industries, will remove the growing poverty. When once we have revived the one industry, all the other industries will follow. I would make the spinning wheel the foundation on which to build a sound village life; I would make the wheel the centre round which all other activities will revolve. — *YI*, 21-5-25, 177.

205. The Charkha is a useful and indispensable article for every home. It is the symbol of the nation's prosperity and therefore freedom. It is a symbol not of commercial war but of commercial peace. It bears not a message of ill-will towards the nations of the earth but of good-will and self-help. It will not need a navy threatening a world's peace and exploiting its resources; but it needs the religious determination of millions to spin their yarn in their own homes as today they cook their food in their own homes. — *YI*, 8-12-21, 406.

Spinning as a Supplementary Industry

206. Hand-spinning does not, it is not intended that it should, compete with, in order to displace, any existing type of industry; it does not aim at withdrawing a single able-bodied person, who can otherwise find a remunerative occupation from his work. The sole claim advanced on its behalf is that it alone offers an immediate, practicable, and permanent solution of that problem of problems that confronts India, viz. the enforced idleness for nearly six months in the year of an overwhelming majority of India's population, owing to lack of a suitable supplementary occupation to agriculture and the chronic starvation of the masses that results therefrom. — *YI*, 21-10-26, 368.

207. I have not contemplated, much less advised, the abandonment of a single healthy, life-giving industrial activity for the sake of hand-spinning. The entire foundation of the spinning wheel rests on the fact that there are crores of semi-employed people in India. And I should admit that if there were none such, there would be no room for the spinning wheel. — *YI*, 27-5-26, 191.

208. The spinning wheel is not meant to oust a single man or woman from his or her occupation. It seeks only to harness every single idle minute of our millions for common productive work. — *YI*, 23-1-30, 30.

Its Organizational Aspect

209. Khadi gives work to all, mill cloth gives work to some and deprives many of honest labour. Khadi serves the masses, mill cloth is intended to serve the classes. Khadi serves labour, mill cloth exploits it. — *H*, 10-4-37, 69.

210. Organization of Khaddar is infinitely better than cooperative societies or any other form of village organization. It is fraught with the highest political consequence, because it removes the greatest immoral temptation from Britain's way. I call the Lancashire trade immoral, because it was raised and is sustained on the ruin of millions of India's peasants. And as one immorality leads to another, the many proved immoral acts of Britain are traceable to

this one immoral traffic. If, therefore, this one great temptation is removed from Britain's path by India's voluntary effort, it would be good for India, good for Britain and, as Britain is today the predominant world-power, good even for humanity. — *YI*, 26-12-24, 420.

211. A starving man thinks first of satisfying his hunger before anything else. He will sell his liberty and all for the sake of getting a morsel of food. Such is the position of millions of the people of India. For them, liberty, God and all such words are merely letters put together without the slightest meaning. They jar upon them. If we want to give these people a sense of freedom we shall have to provide them with work which they can easily do in their desolate home and which would give them least the barest living. This can only be done by the spinning wheel. And when they have become self-reliant and are able to support themselves, we are in a position to talk to them about freedom, about Congress etc. Those, therefore, who bring them work and means of getting a crust of bread will be their deliverers and will be also the people who will make them hunger for liberty. Hence the political value of the spinning wheel, apart from its further ability to displace foreign cloth and thus remove the greatest temptation in the way of Englishmen to hold India even at the risk of having to repeat the Jalianwala massacre times without number. -- *YI*, 18-3-26, 105.

212. It would necessitate the closest contact of workers with the masses and thus make them one with the people. If successful, it would result in total elimination of foreign cloth, thus reducing, if not altogether destroying, the poisonous influence of foreign capital upon the system of Government prevailing in India. This is its very important political result. — *YI*, 5-5-27, 148.

213. Before the educated classes, I do not place the economic aspect of the spinning wheel. I simply want them to realize the spiritual aspect of the thing. By spinning and wearing Khadi alone, they will express their sympathy for the poor. But for the poor the economic is the spiritual. You cannot make any other appeal to those starving millions. — *YI*, 5-5-27, 142.

Does It Mean Going Back?

214. Many people think that in advocating Khadi I am sailing against a head wind and am sure to sink the ship of Swaraj, that I am taking the country to the dark ages. I do not propose to argue the case of Khadi in this brief survey. But (I want to repeat that) it connotes the beginning of economic freedom and equality of all in the country. — *CP*, 7.

215. Mediaeval times may have been bad, but I am not prepared to condemn things simply because they are mediaeval. The spinning wheel is undoubtedly mediaeval, but it seems to have come to stay. Though this article is the same, it has become a symbol of freedom and unity as at one time, after the advent of the East India Company, it had become the symbol of slavery. Modern India has found in it a deeper and truer meaning than our forefathers had dreamt of. Even so, if the handicrafts were once symbols of factory labour, may they now be symbols and vehicles of education in the fullest and truest sense of the term. — *H*, 16-10-37, 300.

Khadi not a Commercial Concern

216. Every one should realize that it is wrong to consider Khadi as merely a means of livelihood. If it were only an industry it ought to be run on commercial lines. The mills provide a livelihood to thousands, if not lakhs, in one city. Through Khadi we put crores of rupees into the pockets of 15,000 villages. That is the only difference between the two. Regarded in this light, the case for the use of Khadi to the exclusion of mill cloth loses much of its force. And the claim of Khadi as a means of attaining Swaraj also falls to the ground. But the ideal of Khadi has always been as a means, *par excellence*, for the resuscitation of villages and therethrough the generation of real strength among the masses — the strength that will *ipso facto* bring Swaraj.

It is not proper that the relief rendered to villages should rest on the sentiments of townsfolk. We have to awaken villagers themselves and make them capable of

tackling their own problems and forging ahead through their own strength. Multiplication of mills will certainly provide cloth for people and if there is proper governmental control of prices, it will be sufficiently cheap too. That will save people from exploitation and ensure decent wages also for the mill hands. But the special claim for Khadi is that it is an unrivalled means for rescuing the masses from the idleness and inertia in which they are today plunged and for creating in them the necessary strength for winning through.

Q. Did our claim amount to this, that Khadi can provide a supplementary means of livelihood to those who remain idle for so many months in the year ?

A. That is so, of course, but it did not stop there. It was claimed that Swaraj hung on the yarn of the spinning wheel. —*Stc*, 8.

217. It will not produce the slightest impression on me if the figures for Khadi production were to shoot up from two to four lakhs. If that were to happen, it would only prove that Khadi is a blessing to the poor. But then why have a country-wide organization like the A. I. S. A. merely for the purpose ? Economic relief to the poor by itself cannot bring Swaraj. I go so far as to say that even if poor-relief Khadi disappears in the face of Khadi for Swaraj, the poor will not be losers, because it will be possible to provide bread for the poor through other means. The pride of Khadi consists in subserving the ideal of Swaraj as well as helping the poor. For, only in such Swaraj can the poor really come to their own.

Q. We shall have to discontinue the large-scale sales of Khadi in vogue in the cities, if the prospective purchasers are to be asked to spin for it. This will mean, in the first instance, large-scale closing down of *bhandars*.

A. Your objection is probably substantial from the commercial point of view. The masses today are steeped in poverty. They will do anything they are asked to. But unless their activity is directed by full understanding, we shall deceive them and ourselves to the bargain. The employment we give to spinners and weavers today is almost on a par

with doles distributed during times of famine or distress against such occupations as breaking of stones, building of roads, etc., which has no permanent value. —*Stc,* 15.

Relation between the New Scheme of Khadi, Swaraj and Non-violence

218. My experience tells me that in order to make Khadi universal both in the cities and villages, it should be made available only in exchange for yarn. Today a mere one anna's worth in the rupee is demanded. But this must be for the initial stages only. When people have understood the meaning of new rule and learnt how to spin, then Khadi should be procurable only in full exchange for hand-spun yarn. As time passes I hope people will themselves insist on buying Khadi through yarn currency. If, however, this does not happen and they produce yarn grudgingly, I fear Swaraj through non-violence will be impossible.

One of the strongest arguments advanced against the new system is that if the city folk produce their own yarn, even the little that is being done by the Sangh for the poor will vanish and the hope of seeing villagers clad in home-spun will remain a dream. Suppose for argument's sake, that city people give up wearing Khadi either through anger or laziness and villagers, for consequent lack of wages, cease to spin and weave, what great loss accrues ? The poor will seek out other occupation and somehow or other eke out a living. Indeed lakhs are doing so today but the analogy cannot affect crores. Those engaged in *bidi*-making today earn four times as much as, or even more than, the spinners. Many mill labourers have become rich. It follows then that those who are starving today will starve unto death and the few who are able to make money will exploit the rest. An increase in the number of mills and cities will certainly not contribute to the prosperity of India's millions. On the contrary, it will bring further poverty to the unemployed and all the diseases that follow in the wake of starvation. If town-dwellers can look upon such a spectacle with equanimity there is nothing more to be said. In such an event it will be the reign of violence in

India, not a reign of Truth and *ahimsa*. And we shall be forced to admit that there is naturally no room there for Khadi. Military training will then have to be compulsory for all. But we must only think in terms of the starving crores. If they are to be restored, if they are to live, then the Charkha must be made the central activity and people must spin voluntarily. The weapon of non-violence may not, however, be taken up because there is no alternative to it. There must be faith in it. The rule of yarn for the purchase of Khadi must not only come into force but must increase in its application. If, on account of it, the existing *bhandars* have to close down and Khadi-wearers give up Khadi, it will still be a triumph for Truth because it will be clear that people had no real faith in non-violence and that they wore Khadi out of ignorance and deceived themselves into thinking that thereby they would obtain Swaraj. When I know that such Khadi will never obtain Swaraj and even if Swaraj is attained it will immediately be discarded, how can I allow people to continue to deceive themselves ? In that case the prophecy of the late Shri Chintamani will come true that on Gandhiji's death people will dislike him and his spinning wheel to such an extent that they will throw out Charkhas from their homes to make his funeral pyre. If hand-spun yarn is not in fact a symbol of non-violence then I should retrieve my error during my lifetime and save, at any rate, the wood of the Charkhas. But I do not believe in the truth of that prophecy. People have understood that the crores of India cannot win freedom through violence. India occupies a very great position in the world. She can become still greater. But she can only do so through non-violence. If India's crores wish to demonstrate the workability of non-violence they can only do so by making the Charkha their central activity. And as the desire for freedom is even stronger amongst city people, it becomes their bounden duty to understand this truth and take to spinning and Khadi-wearing in earnest for their attainment of non-violent Swaraj.— *Stc*, 5.

V

INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION : OLD AND NEW

Industrialism

219. Industrialism is, I am afraid, going to be a curse for mankind. Industrialism depends entirely on your capacity to exploit, on foreign markets being open to you, and on the absence of competitors. It is because these factors are getting less and less every day for England, that its number of unemployed is mounting up daily. The Indian boycott was but a flea-bite. And if that is the state of England, a vast country like India cannot expect to benefit by industrialization. In fact, India, when it begins to exploit other nations — as it must do if it becomes industrialized — will be a curse for other nations, a menace to the world. And why should I think of industrializing India to exploit other nations? Don't you see the tragedy of the situation viz., that we can find work for our 300 millions unemployed, but England can find none for its three millions and is faced with a problem that baffles the greatest intellects of England? The future of industrialism is dark. England has got successful competitors in America, Japan, France, Germany. It has competitors in the handful of mills in India, and as there has been an awakening in India, even so there will be an awakening in South Africa with its vastly richer resources — natural, mineral and human. The mighty English look quite pigmies before the mighty races of Africa. They are noble savages after all, you will say. They are certainly noble, but no savages; and in the course of a few years the Western nations may cease to find in Africa a dumping ground for their wares. And if the future of industrialism is dark for the West, would it not be darker still for India?
— *YI*, 12-11-31, 355.

220. 'What is the cause of the present chaos?' It is exploitation, I will not say, of the weaker nations by the stronger, but of sister nations by sister nations. And my fundamental objection to machinery rests on the fact that it is machinery that has enabled these nations to exploit

others. In itself it is wooden thing and can be turned to good purpose or bad. But it is easily truned to a bad purpose as we know. — *YI*, 22-10-31, 318.

221. Indeed, the West has had a surfeit of industrialism and exploitation. The fact is that this industrial civilization is a disease because it is *all* evil. Let us not be deceived by catchwords and phrases. I have no quarrel with steamships and telegraphs. They may stay, if they can, without the support of industrialism and all it connotes. They are not an end. They are in no way indispensable for the permanent welfare of the human race. Now that we know the use of steam and electricity, we should be able to use them on due occasion and after we have learnt to avoid industrialism. Our concern is therefore to destroy industrialism at any cost. — *YI*, 7-10-26, 348.

The Present State in India

222. Little do town-dwellers know how the semi-starved masses of India are slowly sinking to lifelessness. Little do they know that their miserable comfort represents the brokerage, they get for the work they do for the foreign exploiter, that the profits and the brokerage are sucked from the masses. Little do they realize that the Government established by law in British India is carried on for this exploitation of the masses. No sophistry, no jugglery in figures can explain away the evidence that the skeletons in many villages present to the naked eye. I have no doubt whatsoever that both England and the town-dwellers of India will have to answer, if there is a God above, for this crime against humanity which is perhaps unequalled in history. — *YI*, 23-3-22, 167.

The Root Cause

223. The present distress is undoubtedly insufferable. Pauperism must go. But industrialism is no remedy. The evil does not lie in the use of bullock-carts. It lies in our selfishness and want of consideration for our neighbours. If we have no love for our neighbours, no change, however revolutionary, can do us any good. — *YI*, 7-10-26, 348.

224. I would destroy that system today, if I had the power. I would use the most deadly weapons, if I believed that they would destroy it. I refrain only because the use of such weapons would only perpetuate the system though it may destroy its present administrators. Those who seek to destroy men rather than manners, adopt the latter and become worse than those whom they destroy under the mistaken belief that the manners will die with the men. They do not know the root of the evil. — *YI*. 17-3-27, 85.

Machinery in the Ideal Condition

225. 'Ideally would you not rule out all machinery ?' Ideally, however, I would rule out all machinery, even as I would reject this very body, which is not helpful to salvation, and seek the absolute liberation of the soul. From that point of view, I would reject all machinery, but machines will remain, because like the body, they are inevitable. The body itself, as I told you, is the purest piece of mechanism; but if it is a hindrance to the highest flights of the soul, it has to be rejected. — *YI*, 20-11-24, 386.

Machinery, the Practical Side

226. Machinery has its place; it has come to stay. But it must not be allowed to displace necessary human labour. An improved plough is a good thing. But if by some chances, one man could plough up by some mechanical invention of his the whole of the land of India, and control all the agricultural produce and if the millions had no other occupation, they would starve, and being idle, they would become dunces, as many have already become. There is hourly danger of man more being reduced to that unenviable state.

I would welcome every improvement in the cottage machine, but I know that it is criminal to displace hand-labour by the introduction of power-driven spindles unless one is at the same time ready to give millions of farmers some other occupation in their homes. — *YI*, 5-11-25, 377.

227. That use of machinery is lawful which subserves the interest of all. — *YI*, 15-4-26, 142.

228. I would favour the use of the most elaborate machinery if thereby India's pauperism and resulting idleness

be avoided. I have suggested hand-spinning as the only ready means of driving away penury and making famine of work and wealth impossible. The spinning wheel itself is a piece of valuable machinery, and in my own humble way I have tried to secure improvements in it in keeping with the special conditions of India. — *YI*, 3-11-21, 350.

229. 'Are you against all machinery?'

My answer is emphatically, 'No'. But, I am against its indiscriminate multiplication. I refuse to be dazzled by the seeming triumph of machinery. I am uncompromisingly against all destructive machinery. But simple tools and instruments and such machinery as saves individual labour and lightens the burden of the millions of cottages, I should welcome. — *YI*, 17-6-26, 218.

230. What I object to, is the *craze* for machinery, not machinery as such. The *craze* is for what they call labour-saving machinery. Men go on 'saving labour', till thousands are without work and thrown on the open streets to die of starvation. I want to save time and labour, not for a fraction of mankind, but for all; I want the concentration of wealth, not in the hands of few, but in the hands of all. Today machinery merely helps a few to ride on the back of millions. The impetus behind it all is not the philanthropy to save labour, but greed. It is against this constitution of things that I am fighting with all my might.

'Then you are fighting not against machinery as such, but against its abuses which are so much in evidence today.'

I would unhesitatingly say 'yes'; but I would add that scientific truths and discoveries should first of all cease to be mere instruments of greed. Then labourers will not be over-worked and machinery, instead of becoming a hindrance, will be a help. I am aiming, not at eradication of all machinery, but limitation.

'When logically argued out, that would seem to imply that all complicated power-driven machinery should go.'

It might have to go but I must make one thing clear. The supreme consideration is man. The machine should not tend to make atrophied the limbs of man. For instance, I would make intelligent exceptions. Take the case of the Singer Sewing

Machine. It is one of the few useful things ever invented, and there is a romance about the device itself. Singer saw his wife labouring over the tedious process of sewing and seaming with her own hands, and simply out of his love for her he devised the Sewing Machine in order to save her from unnecessary labour. He, however, saved not only her labour but also the labour of everyone who could purchase a sewing machine.

'But in that case there would have to be a factory for making these Singer Sewing Machines, and it would have to contain power-driven machinery of ordinary type.'

Yes, but I am socialist enough to say that such factories should be nationalized, or State-controlled. They ought only to be working under the most attractive and ideal conditions, not for profit, but for the benefit of humanity, love taking the place of greed as the motive. It is an alteration in the condition of labour that I want. This mad rush for wealth must cease, and the labourer must be assured, not only of a living wage, but a daily task that is not a mere drugery. The machine will, under these conditions, be as much a help to the man working it as to the State, or the man who owns it. The present mad rush will cease, and the labourer will work (as I have said) under attractive and ideal conditions. This is but one of the exceptions I have in mind. The Sewing Machine had love at its back. The individual is the one supreme consideration. The saving of labour of the individual should be the object, and honest humanitarian consideration, and not greed, the motive. Replace greed by love and everything will come right.— *YI, 13-11-24, 378.*

231. 'You are against this machine age, I see.'

To say that is to caricature my views. I am not against machinery as such, but I am totally opposed to it when it masters us.

'You would not industrialize India ?'

I would indeed, in my sense of the term. The village communities should be revived. Indian villages produced and supplied to the Indian towns and cities all their wants. India became impoverished when our cities became foreign markets and began to drain the villages dry by dumping cheap and shoddy goods from foreign lands.

'You would then go back to the natural economy?'

Yes. Otherwise I should go back to the city. I am quite capable of running a big enterprize, but I deliberately sacrificed the ambition, not as a sacrifice, but because my heart rebelled against it. For I should have no share in the spoliation of the nation which is going on from day to day. But I am industrializing the village in a different way. — *H*, 27-2-37, 18.

Large-scale Production and Our Economic Problem

232. Our mills cannot today spin enough for our wants, and if they did, they will not keep down prices unless they were compelled. They are frankly money-makers and will not therefore regulate prices according to the needs of the nation. Hand-spinning is therefore designed to put millions of rupees in the hands of poor villagers. Every agricultural country requires a supplementary industry to enable the peasants to utilize the spare hours. Such industry for India has always been spinning. Is it such a visionary ideal — an attempt to revive an ancient occupation whose destruction has brought on slavery, pauperism and disappearance of the inimitable artistic talents which was once all expressed in the wonderful fabric of India and which was the envy of the world? — *YI*, 16-2-21, 50.

233. We want to organize our national power not by adopting the best methods of production only, but by the best method of *both* the production and distribution. — *YI*, 28-7-20, *Tagore*, 544.

234. What India needs is not the concentration of capital in a few hands, but its distribution so as to be within easy reach of the 7½ lakhs of villages that make this continent 1900 miles long and 1500 miles broad. — *YI*, 23-3-21, 93.

235. Multiplication of mills cannot solve the problem. They can only cause concentration of money and labour and thus make confusion worse confounded. — *YI*, 10-12-19, *Tagore*, 487.

236. India should wear no machine-made clothing whether it comes out of European mills or Indian mills (written in 1909). — *Nat*, 1043.

237. Do I seek to destroy the mill industry, I have often been asked. If I did, I should not have pressed for the abolition of the excise duty. I want the mill industry to prosper — only I do not want it to prosper at the expense of the country. On the contrary, if the interests of the country demand that the industry should go, I should let it go without the slightest compunction. — *YI*, 24-2-27, 58.

238. The great mill industry may be claimed to be an Indian industry. But, in spite of its ability to compete with Japan and Lancashire, it is an industry that exploits the masses and deepens their poverty in exact proportion to its success over Khadi. In the modern craze for wholesale industrialization, my presentation has been questioned, if not brushed aside. It has been contended that the growing poverty of the masses, due to the progress of industrialization, is inevitable, and should therefore be suffered. I do not consider the evil to be inevitable, let alone to be suffered. The A. I. S. A. has successfully demonstrated the possibility of the villages manufacturing the whole of the cloth requirement of India, simply by employing the leisure hours of the nation in spinning and the anterior processes. The difficulty lies in weaning the nation from the use of mill cloth. This is not the place to discuss how it can be done. My purpose in this note was to give my definition of Indian industry in terms of the millions of villagers, and my reason for that definition. — *H*, 23-10-37, 311.

The Economics of Khadi

239. The science of Khadi requires decentralization of production and consumption. Consumption should take place as nearly as possible where Khadi is produced. — *H*, 2-11-35, 300.

240. The central fact of Khaddar is to make every village self-supporting for its food and clothing. — *YI*, 17-7-24, 234.

241. Self-sufficient Khadi will never succeed without cotton being grown by spinners themselves or practically in every village. It means decentralization of cotton cultivation so far at least as self-sufficient Khadi is concerned. — *H*, 27-7-35, 188.

242. Khaddar does not seek to destroy all machinery but it does regulate its use and check its weedy growth. It uses machinery for the service of the poorest in their own cottages. The wheel is itself an exquisite piece of machinery. — *YI*, 17-3-27, 85.

243. I am personally opposed to great trusts and concentration of industries by means of elaborate machinery. If India takes to Khaddar and all it means, I do not lose the hope of India taking only as much of the modern machinery as may be considered necessary for the amenities of life and for labour-saving purposes. — *YI*, 24-7-24, 246.

Revival of the Village

244. I would say that if the village perishes India will perish too. India will be no more India. Her own mission in the world will get lost. The revival of the village is possible only when it is no more exploited. Industrialization on a mass scale will necessarily lead to passive or active exploitation of the villagers as the problems of competition and marketing come in. Therefore we have to concentrate on the village being self-contained, manufacturing mainly for use. Provided this character of the village industry is maintained, there would be no objection to villagers using even the modern machines and tools that they can make and can afford to use. Only they should not be used as a means of exploitation of others. — *H*, 29-8-36, 226.

Mass Production vs. Production by the Masses

245. I would categorically state my conviction that the mania for mass-production is responsible for the world-crisis. Granting for the moment that machinery may supply all the needs of humanity, still, it would concentrate production in particular areas, so that you would have to go about in a round about way to regulate distribution, whereas, if there is production and distribution both in the respective areas where things are required, it is automatically regulated, and there is less chance for fraud, none for speculation.

You see that these nations (Europe and America) are able to exploit the so-called weaker or unorganized races

of the world. Once these races gain an elementary knowledge and decide that they are no more going to be exploited, they will simply be satisfied with what they can provide themselves. Mass-production, then, at least where the vital necessities are concerned, will disappear.

When production and consumption both become localized, the temptation to speed up production, indefinitely and at any price, disappears. All the endless difficulties and problems that our present-day economic system presents, too, would then come to an end.

There could be no unnatural accumulation of hoards in the pockets of the few, and want in the midst of plenty in regard to the rest.

'Then, you do not envisage mass-production as an ideal future of India?'

Oh yes, mass-production, certainly, but not based on force. After all, the message of the spinning-wheel is that. It is mass-production, but mass-production in people's own homes. If you multiply individual production to millions of times, would it not give you mass-production on a tremendous scale? But I quite understand that your "mass-production" is a technical term for production by the fewest possible number through the aid of highly complicated machinery. I have said to myself that that is wrong. My machinery must be of the most elementary type which I can put in the homes of the millions.

'So, you are opposed to machinery, only because and when it concentrates production and distribution in the hands of the few?'

You are right, I hate privilege and monopoly. Whatever cannot be shared with the masses is taboo to me. That is all. — *H*, 2-11-34, 301.

Decentralization and Non-violence

246. I suggest that, if India is to evolve along non-violent lines, it will have to decentralize many things. Centralization cannot be sustained and defended without adequate force. Simple homes from which there is nothing to take away require no policing; the palaces of the rich must have strong

guards to protect them against dacoity. So must huge factories. Rurally organized India will run less risk of foreign invasion than urbanized India, well equipped with military, naval and air forces. — *H*, 30-12-39, 391.

247. Remember also that your non-violence cannot operate effectively unless you have faith in the spinning wheel. I would ask you to read *Hind Swaraj* with my eyes and see therein the chapter on how to make India non-violent. You cannot build non-violence on a factory civilization, but it can be built on self-contained villages. Even if Hitler was so minded, he could not devastate even hundred thousand non-violent villages. He would himself become non-violent in the process. Rural economy as I have conceived it, eschews exploitation altogether, and exploitation is the essence of violence. You have, therefore, to be rural-minded before you can be non-violent, and to be rural-minded you have to have faith in the spinning wheel. — *H*, 4-11-39, 331.

248. The end to be sought is human happiness combined with full mental and moral growth. I use the adjective moral as synonymous with spiritual. This end can be achieved under decentralization. Centralization as a system is inconsistent with non-violent structure of society. — *H*, 18-1-42, 5.

A Picture of Village Swaraj

249. My idea of Village Swaraj is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its vital wants, and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity. Thus every village's first concern will be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth. It should have a reserve for its cattle, recreation and playground for adults and children. Then if there is more land available, it will grow *useful* money crops, thus excluding *ganja*, tobacco, opium and the like. The village will maintain a village theatre, school and public hall. It will have its own waterworks ensuring clean supply. This can be done through controlled wells and tanks. Education will be compulsory up to the final basic course. As far as possible every activity

will be conducted on the cooperative basis. There will be no castes such as we have today with their graded untouchability. Non-violence with its technique of *Satyagraha* and non-cooperation will be the sanction of the village community. There will be a compulsory service of village guards who will be selected by rotation from the register maintained by the village. The Government of the village will be conducted by the *Panchayat* of five persons, annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. These will have all the authority and jurisdiction required. Since there will be no system of punishments in the accepted sense, this *Panchayat* will be the legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for its year of office. Any village can become such a republic today without much interference, even from the present Government whose sole effective connection with the villages is the exaction of the village revenue. I have not examined here the question of relations with the neighbouring villages and the centre if any. My purpose is to present an outline of village government. Here there is perfect democracy based upon individual freedom. The individual is the architect of his own government. The law of non-violence rules him and his government. He and his village are able to defy the might of a world. For the law governing every villager is that he will suffer death in the defence of his and his village's honour. — *H*, 26-7-42, 238.

VI

THE DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH

Nature's Plan

250. I suggest that we are thieves in a way. If I take anything that I do not need for my own immediate use, and keep it, I thieve it from somebody else. I venture to suggest that it is the fundamental law of Nature, without exception, that Nature produces enough for our wants from day to day, and if only everybody took enough for himself and nothing more, there would be no pauperism in this world, there would be no man dying of starvation in this world. But so long as we have got this inequality, so long we are thieving. I am no socialist and I do not want to dispossess those who have got possessions: but I do say that, personally, those of us who want to see light out of darkness have to follow this rule. I do not want to dispossess anybody. I should then be departing from the rule of *ahimsa*. If somebody else possesses more than I do, let him. But so far as my own life has to be regulated, I do say that I dare not possess anything which I do not want. In India we have got three millions of people having to be satisfied with one meal a day, and that meal consisting of a *chapati* containing no fat in it, and a pinch of salt. You and I have no right to anything that we really have until these three millions are clothed and fed better. You and I, who ought to know better, must adjust our wants, and even undergo voluntary starvation in order that they may be nursed, fed and clothed. — *Nat*, 384.

251. If all men realized the obligation of service (as an eternal moral law), they would regard it as a sin to amass wealth; and then, there would be no inequalities of wealth and consequently no famine or starvation. —*Er*, 58.

252. Non-possession is allied to non-stealing. A thing not originally stolen must nevertheless be classified stolen property, if one possesses it without needing it. Possession implies provision for the future. A seeker after Truth, a follower of a Law of Love cannot hold anything against

tomorrow. God never stores for the morrow; He never creates more than what is strictly needed for the moment. If therefore, we repose faith in His providence, we should rest assured, that He will give us everything that we require. Saints and devotees, who have lived in such faith, have always derived a justification for it from their experience. Our ignorance or negligence of the Divine Law, which gives to man from day to day his daily bread and no more, has given rise to inequalities with all the miseries attendant upon them. The rich have a superfluous store of things which they do not need, and which are therefore neglected and wasted, while millions are starved to death for want of sustenance. If each retained possession only of what he needed, no one would be in want, and all would live in contentment. As it is, the rich are discontented no less than the poor. The poor man would fain become a millionaire, and the millionaire a multimillionaire. The rich should take the initiative in dispossession with a view to a universal diffusion of the spirit of contentment. If only they keep their own property within moderate limits, the starving will be easily fed, and will learn the lesson of contentment along with the rich. — *YM*, 34.

Voluntary, not Involuntary Poverty

253. No one has ever suggested that grinding pauperism can lead to anything else than moral degradation. Every human being has a right to live and therefore to find the wherewithal to feed himself and where necessary, to clothe and house himself. But for this very simple performance we need no assistance from economists or their laws.

'Take no thought for the morrow' is an injunction which finds an echo in almost all the religious scriptures of the world. In well-ordered society the securing of one's livelihood should be and is found to be the easiest thing in the world. Indeed, the test of orderliness in a country is not the number of millionaires it owns, but the absence of starvation among its masses. The only statement that has to be examined is, whether it can be laid down as a law of universal application that material advancement means moral progress.

Now let us take a few illustrations. Rome suffered a moral fall when it attained high material affluence. So did Egypt and so perhaps most countries of which we have any historical record. The descendants and kinsmen of the royal and divine Krishna too fell when they were rolling in riches. We do not deny to the Rockefellers and the Carnegies possession of an ordinary measure of morality but we gladly judge them indulgently. I mean that we do not even expect them to satisfy the highest standard of morality. With them material gain has not necessarily meant moral gain. In South Africa, where I had the privilege of associating with thousands of our countrymen on most intimate terms, I observed almost invariably that the greater the possession of riches, the greater was their moral turpitude. Our rich men, to say the least, did not advance the moral struggle of passive resistance as did the poor. The rich men's sense of self-respect was not so much injured as that of the poorest. If I were not afraid of treading on dangerous ground, I would even come nearer home and show how that possession of riches has been a hindrance to real growth. I venture to think that the scriptures of the world are far safer and sounder treatises on laws of economics than many of the modern text-books. —*Nat*, 350.

Economic Equality : The Goal

254. My ideal is equal distribution, but so far as I can see, it is not to be realized. I therefore work for equitable distribution. —*YI*, 17-3-27, 86.

255. Economic equality is the master key to non-violent independence. Working for economic equality means abolishing the eternal conflict between capital and labour. It means the levelling down of the few rich in whose hands is concentrated the bulk of the nation's wealth on the one hand, and a levelling up of the semi-starved naked millions on the other. A non-violent system of government is clearly an impossibility so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry millions persists. The contrast between the palaces of New Delhi and the miserable hovels of the poor, labouring class cannot last one day in a free India in which

the poor will enjoy the same power as the richest in the land. A violent and bloody revolution is a certainty one day unless there is a voluntary abdication of riches and the power that riches give and sharing them for the common good. I adhere to my doctrine of trusteeship in spite of the ridicule that has been poured upon it. It is true that it is difficult to reach. So is non-violence difficult to attain. But we made up our minds in 1920 to negotiate that steep ascent.— *CP*, 18.

256. The real implication of equal distribution is that each man shall have the wherewithal to supply all his natural wants and no more. For example, if one man has a weak digestion and requires only a quarter of a pound of flour for his bread and another needs a pound, both should be in a position to satisfy their wants. To bring this ideal into being the entire social order has got to be reconstructed. A society based on non-violence cannot nurture any other ideal. We may not perhaps be able to realize the goal, but we must bear it in mind and work unceasingly to near it. To the same extent as we progress towards our goal we shall find contentment and happiness, and to that extent too, shall we have contributed towards the bringing into being of a non-violent society.

Now let us consider how equal distribution can be brought about through non-violence. The first step towards it is for him who has made this ideal part of his being to bring about the necessary changes in his personal life. He would reduce his wants to a minimum, bearing in mind the poverty of India. His earnings would be free of dishonesty. The desire for speculation would be renounced. His habitation would be in keeping with his new mode of life. There would be self-restraint exercised in every sphere of life. When he has done all that is possible in his own life, then only will he be in a position to preach this ideal among his associates and neighbours.

Indeed at the root of this doctrine of equal distribution must lie that of the trusteeship of the wealthy for superfluous wealth possessed by them. For according to the doctrine they may not possess a rupee more than their neighbours.

How is this to be brought about? Non-violently? Or should the wealthy be dispossessed of their possessions? To do this we would naturally have to resort to violence. This violent action cannot benefit society. Society will be the poorer, for it will lose the gifts of a man who knows how to accumulate wealth. Therefore non-violent way is evidently superior. The rich man will be left in possession of his wealth, of which he will use what he reasonably requires for his personal needs and will act as a trustee for the remainder to be used for the society. In this argument, honesty on the part of the trustee is assumed.

If however, in spite of the utmost effort, the rich do not become guardians of the poor in the true sense of the term and the latter are more and more crushed and die of hunger, what is to be done? In trying to find out the solution of this riddle I have lighted on non-violent non-cooperation and civil disobedience as the right and infallible means. The rich cannot accumulate wealth without the cooperation of the poor in society. If this knowledge were to penetrate to and spread amongst the poor, they would become strong and would learn how to free themselves by means of non-violence from the crushing inequalities which have brought them to the verge of starvation.
—*H*, 25-8-40, 260.

In Favour of Equality of Income

257. Put your talents in the service of the country instead of converting them into £. s. d. If you are a medical man, there is disease enough in India to need all your medical skill. If you are a lawyer, there are differences and quarrels enough in India. Instead of fomenting more trouble, patch up those quarrels and stop litigation. If you are an engineer, build model houses suited to the means and needs of our people and yet full of health and fresh air. There is nothing that you have learnt which cannot be turned to account. (The friend who asked the question was a Chartered Accountant and Gandhiji then said to him:) There is a dire need everywhere for accountants to audit the accounts of Congress and its adjunct associations. Come

to India — I will give you enough work and also your hire — 4 annas* per day which is surely much more than millions in India get. — *YI*, 5-11-31, 334.

258. (Several Mysore lawyers who had taken part in the Mysore *Satyagraha* struggle had been disbarred by the Mysore Chief Court. Gandhiji wrote about them:) Let these lawyers be proud of their poverty which will be probably their lot now. Let them remember Thoreau's saying that possession of riches is a crime and poverty a virtue under an unjust administration. This is an eternal maxim for *Satyagrahis*. The disbarred lawyers have a rare opportunity of so remodelling their lives that they can always be above want. Let them remember that practice of law ought not to mean taking more daily than, say, a village carpenter's wage. — *H*, 13-7-40, 205.

The Hypnotic Influence of Capital

259. We have unfortunately come under the hypnotic suggestion and the hypnotic influence of Capital, so that we have come to believe that Capital is all in all on earth. But a moment's thought would show that Labour has at its disposal Capital which the Capitalist will never possess. Ruskin taught in his age that Labour has unrivalled opportunities. But he spoke above our heads. At the present moment there is an Englishman, Sir Daniel Hamilton, who is really making the experiment. He is an economist. He is a Capitalist also; but through his economic research and experiments he has come to the same conclusions as Ruskin had arrived at intuitively, and he has brought to Labour a vital message. He says it is wrong to think that a piece of metal constitutes Capital. He says it is wrong even to think that so much produce is Capital; but he adds that if we go to the very source, it is Labour that is Capital, and that living Capital is inexhaustible. — *IC*, 393.

Earlier Writings on Capital and Labour

260. The avowed policy of Non-cooperation has been not to make political use of disputes between Labour and Capital. They have endeavoured to hold the balance evenly between the two — we would be fools if we wantonly set

labour against capital. It would be just the way to play into the hands of a Government which would greatly strengthen its hold on the country by setting capitalists against labourers and vice versa. In Jharia, for instance, it was a non-co-operator who prevented an extending strike. The moderating influence in Calcutta was that of Non-co-operators. The latter will not hesitate to advance the cause of strikers where they have a just grievance. They have ever refused to lend their assistance to unjust strikes. — *YI*, 20-4-21, 124.

261. Swaraj as conceived by me does not mean the end of kingship. Nor does it mean the end of capital. Accumulated capital means ruling power. I am for the establishment of right relations between capital and labour etc. I do not wish for the supremacy of the one over the other. I do not think there is any natural antagonism between them. The rich and the poor will always be with us. But their mutual relations will be subject to constant change. — *YI*, 8-1-25, 10.

262. I do not fight shy of capital. I fight capitalism. The West teaches us to avoid concentration of capital, to avoid a racial war in another and deadlier form. Capital and labour need not be antagonistic to each other. I cannot picture to myself a time when no man shall be richer than another. But I do picture to myself a time when the rich will spurn to enrich themselves at the expense of the poor and the poor will cease to envy the rich. Even in a most perfect world, we shall fail to avoid inequalities, but we can and must avoid strife and bitterness. There are numerous examples extant of the rich and the poor living in perfect friendliness. We have but to multiply such instances.
— *YI*, 7-10-26, 348.

Position of Labour : More Recent Views

263. Q. What is your opinion about the social economics of Bolshevism and how far do you think they are fit to be copied by our country?

A. I must confess that I have not yet been able fully to understand the meaning of Bolshevism. All that I know is that it aims at the abolition of the institution of private property. This is only an application of the ethical ideal of

non-possession in the realm of economics and if the people adopted this ideal of their own accord or could be made to accept it by means of peaceful persuasion, there would be nothing like it. But from what I know of Bolshevism it not only does not preclude the use of force but freely sanctions it for the expropriation of private property and maintaining the collective State ownership of the same. And if that is so I have no hesitation in saying that the Bolshevik regime in its present form cannot last for long. For it is my firm conviction that nothing enduring can be built on violence. But be that as it may there is no questioning the fact that the Bolshevik ideal has behind it the purest sacrifice of countless men and women who have given up their all for its sake, and an ideal that is sanctified by the sacrifices of such master spirits as Lenin cannot go in vain: the noble example of their renunciation will be emblazoned for ever and quicken and purify the ideal as time passes. —*YI*, 15-11-28, 381.

264. Q. How exactly do you think the Indian princes, landlords, millowners and money-lenders and other profiteers are enriched ?

A. At the present moment by exploiting the masses.

Q. Can these classes be enriched without the exploitation of the Indian workers and peasants ?

A. To a certain extent, yes.

Q. Have these classes any social justification to live more comfortably than the ordinary worker and peasant who does the work which provides their wealth ?

A. No justification. My idea of society is that while we are born equal, meaning that we have a right to equal opportunity, all have not the same capacity. It is, in the nature of things, impossible. For instance, all cannot have the same height, or colour or degree of intelligence, etc; therefore in the nature of things, some will have ability to earn more and others less. People with talents will have more, and they will utilize their talents for this purpose. If they utilize their talents kindly, they will be performing the work of the State. Such people exist as trustees, on no other terms. I would allow a man of intellect to earn more,

I would not cramp his talent. But the bulk of his greater earnings must be used for the good of the State, just as the income of all earning sons of the father go to the common family fund. They would have their earnings only as trustees. It may be that I would fail miserably in this. But that is what I am sailing for.

The masses do not today see in landlords and other profiteers their enemy; but the consciousness of the wrong done to them by these classes has to be created in them. I do not teach the masses to regard the capitalists as their enemies, but I teach them that they are their own enemies. Non-co-operators never told the people that the British or General Dyer were bad, but that they were the victims of a system. So that, the system must be destroyed and not the individual.

The zamindar is merely a tool of a system. It is not necessary to take up a movement against them at the same time as against the British system. It is possible to distinguish between the two. But, we had to tell the people not to pay to the zamindars, because, out of this money the zamindars paid to the Government. But, we have no quarrel with the zamindars as such, so long as they act well by the tenants. — *YI*, 26-11-31, 368.

An Appeal to the Upper Classes

265. The village work frightens us. We who are town-bred find it trying to take to the village life. Our bodies in many cases do not respond to the hard life. But it is a difficulty which we have to face boldly, even heroically, if our desire is to establish Swaraj for the people, not substitute one class rule by another, which may be even worse. Hitherto the villagers have died in their thousands so that we might live. Now we might have to die so that they may live. The difference will be fundamental. The former have died unknowingly and involuntarily. Their enforced sacrifice had degraded us. If now we die knowingly and willingly, our sacrifice will ennoble us and the whole nation. Let us not flinch from the necessary sacrifice, if we will live as an independent self-respecting nation. — *YI*, 17-4-24, 130.

266. A model zamindar would therefore at once reduce much of the burden the ryot is now bearing. He would come in intimate touch with the ryots and know their wants and inject hope into them in the place of despair which is killing the very life out of them. He will not be satisfied with the ryots' ignorance of the laws of sanitation and hygiene. He will reduce himself to poverty in order that the ryot may have the necessaries of life. He will study the economic condition of the ryots under his care, establish schools in which he will educate his own children side by side with those of the ryots. He will purify the village well and the village tank. He will teach the ryot to sweep his roads and clean his latrines by himself doing this necessary labour. He will throw open without reserve his own gardens for the unrestricted use of the ryot. He will use as hospital, school, or the like most of the unnecessary buildings which he keeps for his pleasure. If only the capitalist class will read the signs of the times, revise their notions of God-given right to all they possess, in an incredibly short space of time the seven hundred thousand dung-heaps which today pass muster as villages can be turned into abodes of peace, health and comfort. I am convinced that the capitalist, if he follows the Samurai of Japan, has nothing really to lose and everything to gain. There is no other choice than between voluntary surrender on the part of the capitalist of superfluities and consequent acquisition of the real happiness of all on the one hand, and on the other, the impending chaos into which, if the capitalist does not wake up betimes, awakened but ignorant, famishing millions will plunge the country and which not even the armed force that a powerful Government can bring into play can avert. — *YI*, 5-12-29, 396.

The Method of Securing Economic Justice

267. Q. How then will you bring about the trusteeship? Is it by persuasion?

A. Not merely by verbal persuasion. I will concentrate on my means. Some have called me the greatest revolutionary of my time. It may be false, but I believe myself to be a

revolutionary — a non-violent revolutionary. My means are non-co-operation. No person can amass wealth without the co-operation, willing or forced, of the people concerned. — *YI*, 26-11-31, 369.

268. The greatest obstacle in the path of non-violence is the presence in our midst of the indigenous interests that have sprung up from British rule, the interests of monied men, speculators, scrip-holders, landholders, factory-owners and the like. All these do not always realize that they are living on the blood of the masses, and when they do, they become as callous as the British principals whose tools and agents they are. If like the Japanese Samurai they could but realize that they must give up their blood-stained gains, the battle is won for non-violence. It must not be difficult for them to see that the holding of millions is a crime when millions of their own kith and kin are starving and that, therefore, they must give up their agency. No principal has yet been found able to work without faithful agents.

But non-violence has to be patient with these as with the British principals. The aim of the non-violent worker must ever be to convert. He may not however wait endlessly. When therefore the limit is reached, he takes risks and conceives plans of active *satyagraha* which may mean civil disobedience and the like. His patience is never exhausted to the point of giving up his creed. — *YI*, 6-2-30, 44.

269. *Q*. If you will benefit the workers, the peasant and the factory-hand, can you avoid class-war ?

A. I can, most decidedly, if only the people will follow the non-violent method. By the non-violent method, we seek not to destroy the capitalist, we seek to destroy capitalism. We invite the capitalist to regard himself as a trustee for those on whom he depends for the making, the retention and the increase of his capital. Nor need the worker wait for his conversion. If capital is power, so is work. Either power can be used destructively or creatively. Either is dependent on the other. Immediately the worker realizes his strength, he is in a position to become a co-sharer with the capitalist instead of remaining his slave. If he

aims at becoming the sole owner, he will most likely be killing the hen that lays golden eggs. Inequalities in intelligence and even opportunity will last till the end of time. A man living on the banks of a river has any day more opportunity of growing crops than one living in an arid desert. But if inequalities stare us in the face the essential equality too is not to be missed. Every man has an equal right to the necessaries of life even as birds and beasts have. And since every right carries with it a corresponding duty and the corresponding remedy for resisting an attack upon it, it is merely a matter of finding out the corresponding duties and remedies to vindicate the elementary equality. The corresponding duty is to labour with my limbs and the corresponding remedy is to non-co-operate with him who deprives me of the fruit of my labour. And if I would recognize the fundamental equality, as I must, of the capitalist and the labourer, I must not aim at his destruction. I must strive for his conversion. My non-co-operation with him will open his eyes to the wrong he may be doing. Nor need I be afraid of someone else taking my place when I have non-co-operated. For I expect to influence my co-worker so as not to help the wrong-doing of the employer. This kind of education of the mass of workers is no doubt a slow process, but as it is also the surest, it is necessarily the quickest. It can be easily demonstrated that destruction of the capitalist must mean destruction in the end of the worker; and as no human being is so bad as to be beyond redemption, no human being is so perfect as to warrant his destroying him whom he wrongly considers to be wholly evil. — *YI*, 26-3-31, 49.

270. There is in English a very potent word, and you have it in French also; all the languages of the world have it — it is 'No' : and the secret that we have hit upon is that when Capital wants Labour to say 'Yes', Labour roars out 'No', if it means 'No'. And immediately Labour comes to recognize that it has got its choice of saying 'Yes' when it wants to say 'Yes', and 'No' when it wants to say 'No', Labour is free of Capital and Capital has to woo Labour. And it would not matter in the slightest degree that Capital

has guns and even poison gas at its disposal. Capital would still be perfectly helpless if Labour would assert its dignity by making good its 'No'. Labour does not need to retaliate, but Labour stands defiant receiving the bullets and poison gas and still insists upon its 'No'.

The whole reason why Labour so often fails is that instead of sterilizing Capital, as I have suggested, Labour (I am speaking as a labourer myself) wants to seize that capital and become capitalist itself in the worse sense of the term. And the capitalist, therefore, who is properly entrenched and organized, finding among labourers also candidates for the same office, makes use of a portion of these to suppress Labour. If we really were not under the hypnotic spell, everyone of us, men and women, would recognize this rock-bottom truth without the slightest difficulty. Having proved it for myself through a series of experiments carried on in different departments of life, I am speaking to you with authority (you will pardon me for saying so) that when I put this scheme before you, it was not as something superhuman but as something within the grasp of every labourer, man or woman.

Again, you will see what Labour is called upon to do under this scheme of non-violence is nothing more than what the Swiss soldier does under gun-fire, or the ordinary soldier who is armed from top to toe is called upon to do. While he undoubtedly seeks to inflict death and destruction upon his adversary, he also carries his own life in his pocket. I want Labour, then, to copy the courage of the soldier without copying the brute in the soldier, namely the ability to inflict death; and I suggest to you that a labourer who courts death and has the courage to die without even carrying arms, with no weapon of self-defence, shows a courage of a much higher degree than a man who is armed from top to toe. —*IC*, 394.

VII

A CHAPTER ON CLASS WAR

Non-violence and Exploitation

271. The principle of non-possession necessitates complete abstention from exploitation in any form.—

272. Non-violence in the very nature of things is of no assistance in the defence of ill-gotten gains and immoral acts. — *H*, 5-9-36, 236.

273. In non-violent Swaraj, there can be no encroachment upon just rights; contrariwise, no one can possess unjust rights. — *H*, 25-3-39, 65.

274. You have said that non-violence automatically solves unemployment. You are right, for it rules out exploitation. — *H*, 21-5-38, 121.

A Talk to Zamindars

275. Q. The Karachi Congress passed a resolution laying down the fundamental rights of the people, and since it recognized private property, nationalist zamindars have supported the Congress. But the new Socialist Party in the Congress threatens extinction of private property. How would it affect the Congress policy? Don't you think, this will precipitate class war? Will you prevent it?

A. The Karachi Resolution can be altered only by the open session of the next Congress, but let me assure you that I shall be no party to dispossessing propertied classes of their private property without just cause. My objective is to reach your heart and convert you so that you may hold all your private property in trust for your tenants and use it primarily for their welfare. I am aware of the fact that within the ranks of the Congress a new party, called the Socialist Party is coming into being, and I cannot say what would happen if that party succeeds in carrying the Congress with it. But I am quite clear that if strictly honest and unchallengeable referendum of our millions were to be taken, they would not vote for the wholesale expropriation of the propertied classes. I am working for the co-operation and co-ordination of capital and labour, of

landlord and tenant. It is open to you to join the Congress as much as it is open to the poorest by paying the fee of annas four and subscribing to the Congress creed.

But I must utter a note of warning. I have always told millowners that they are not exclusive owners of mills and workmen are equal sharers in ownership. In the same way, I would tell you that ownership of your land belongs as much to the ryots as to you, and you may not squander your gains in luxurious or extravagant living, but must use them for the well-being of ryots. Once you make your ryots experience a sense of kinship with you, and a sense of security that their interests as members of a family will never suffer at your hands, you may be sure that there cannot be a clash between you and them and no class war.

Class war is foreign to the essential genius of India, which is capable of evolving communism on the fundamental rights of all on equal justice. *Ramarajya* of my dream ensures rights alike of prince and pauper.

You may be sure that I shall throw the whole weight of my influence in preventing class war. Supposing that there is an attempt unjustly to deprive you of your property, you will find me fighting on your side.

Q. We propose to support Congress candidates in the next Assembly elections. But we have our misgivings about the policy they will adopt in the Assembly. Could you persuade the Parliamentary Board to dispel our fears?

A. I invite you to discuss the thing with the members of the Parliamentary Board. I know, however, that no member will talk of expropriation or extinction of private property. They will certainly insist on radical reform in your relations with the ryots, but that should be no new thing to you. Even Sir Malcolm Hailey and Lord Irwin appealed to you to realize and live up to the spirit of the times. If you will only do this, you may be sure we shall be able to evolve indigenous socialism of the purest type.

Socialism and communism of the West are based on certain conceptions which are fundamentally different from ours. One such conception is their belief in essential selfishness of human nature. I do not subscribe to it for I

know that the essential difference between man and the brute is that the former can respond to the call of the spirit in him, can rise superior to the passions that he owns in common with the brute and, therefore, superior to selfishness and violence, which belong to the brute nature and not to the immortal spirit of man. That is the fundamental conception of Hinduism, which has years of penance and austerity at the back of discovery of this truth. That is why, whilst we have had saints who have worn out their bodies and laid down their lives in order to explore the secrets of the soul, we have had none, as in the West, who laid down their lives in exploring the remotest or the highest regions of the earth. Our socialism or communism should, therefore, be based on non-violence and on harmonious co-operation of labour and capital, landlord and tenant.

There is nothing in the Congress creed or policy that need frighten you. All your fears and misgivings, permit me to tell you, are those of guilty conscience. Wipe out injustices you may have been consciously or unconsciously guilty of, and shed all fear of Congress and Congressmen. Once you turn a new leaf in relations between zamindars and ryots, you will find us on your side guarding your private rights and property.

When I say 'us', I have Pandit Jawaharlal also in mind, for I am sure that on this essential principle of non-violence there is no difference between us. He does indeed talk of nationalization of property, but it need not frighten you. The nation cannot own property except by vesting it in individuals. It simply ensures its just and equitable use, and prevents all posssible misuse; and I do not think you can have any possible objection to holding your property for the benefit of the ryots. Ryots themselves have no greater ambition than to live in peace and freedom and they will never grudge your possession of property provided you use it for them. — *ABP*, 2-8-34.

Talk to Students on Class War

276. Q. Do you think co-operation between the exploited and the exploiters is at all possible to attain the ideals you

stand for? Do you not think that the time has come when the Congress should take a definite stand for the rights of the masses irrespective of the interests of the capitalists and the landlords? Do you not think that it is not possible to organize the masses effectively on the nationalistic programme, and workers have no need or no other alternative but to array themselves against the capitalists and landlords and for the exploited tenants and labour? Do you not think that a class war is inevitable and interested classes must perish for the sake of a greater humanity?

A. I never said that there should be co-operation between the exploiter and the exploited so long as exploitation and the will to exploit persists. Only I do not believe that the capitalists and the landlords are all exploiters by an inherent necessity, or that there is a basic or irreconcilable antagonism between their interests and those of the masses. All exploitation is based on co-operation, willing or forced, of the exploited. However much we may detest admitting it, the fact remains that there would be no exploitation if people refuse to obey the exploiter. But self comes in and we hug the chains that bind us. This must cease. What is needed is not the extinction of landlords and capitalists, but a transformation of the existing relationship between them and the masses into something healthier and purer.

You ask 'whether the time has not come when the Congress should stand for the rights of the masses as opposed to the interests of the capitalists and the landlords'. My reply is that ever since the Congress has come on the scene, it has done nothing else, whether it was dominated by the Moderates or the Extremists. From its very inception under A. O. Hume, it has sought to represent the masses. That indeed was its origin; and a study of the history of nearly half a century would prove to the hilt that the Congress has been all through progressively representative of the masses.

Do I not think that the time has come when Congress should take a definite stand for the rights of the masses irrespective of the interests of the capitalists and the landlords? No. We, the so-called friends of the masses will

only dig our and their graves if we took that stand. I would like to use the landlords and the capitalists for the service of the masses, as the late Sir Surendra Nath used to do. We must not sacrifice the interests of the masses to the capitalists. We must not play their game. We must trust them to the measure of their ability to surrender their gains for the service of the masses.

Do you think that the so-called privileged classes are altogether devoid of nationalistic sentiments? If you think so, you will be doing grave injustice to them and disservice to the cause of the masses. Are not they too exploited by the rulers? They are not insusceptible to the higher appeal. It has been my invariable experience that a kind word uttered, goes home to them. If we win their confidence and put them at their ease, we will find that they are not averse to progressively sharing their riches with the masses.

Moreover, let us ask ourselves how much we have done to identify ourselves with the masses. Have we bridged the gulf between the surging millions and us? Let us, who live in glass houses, not throw stones. To what extent do you share the life of the masses? I confess that with me, it is still an aspiration. We ourselves have not completely shed the habits of living that we say that the capitalists are notorious for.

The idea of class war does not appeal to me. In India a class war is not only not inevitable, but it is avoidable if we have understood the message of non-violence. Those who talk about class war as being inevitable, have not understood the implications of non-violence or have understood them only skin-deep.

Q. How can the rich help the poor without the rich being poor themselves? Richness or capitalism is a system which tries to perpetuate the colossal difference between capital and labour in order to maintain its position and status. Is it therefore possible to effect any compromise between them without greatly injuring the interests of either?

A. The rich can help the poor by using their riches not for selfish pleasure, but so as to subserve the interests of the poor. If they do so, there will not be that

unbridgeable gulf that today exists between the haves and the have-nots.

Class divisions there will be, but they will then be horizontal, not vertical.

Let us not be obsessed with catch-words and seductive slogans imported from the West. Have we not our distinct Eastern tradition ? Are we not capable of finding our own solution to the question of capital and labour ? What is the system of *Varnashrama* but a means of harmonizing the difference between high and low, as well as between capital and labour ? All that comes from the West on this subject is tarred with the brush of violence. I object to it because I have seen the wreckage that lies at the end of this road. The more thinking set even in the West today stand aghast at the abyss for which their system is heading. And I owe whatever influence I have in the West to my ceaseless endeavour to find a solution which promises an escape from the vicious circle of violence and exploitation. I have been a sympathetic student of the Western social order and I have discovered that underlying the fever that fills the soul of the West there is a restless search for truth. I value that spirit. Let us study our Eastern institutions in that spirit of scientific enquiry and we shall evolve a truer socialism and a truer communism than the world has yet dreamed of. It is surely wrong to presume that Western socialism or communism is the last word on the question of mass poverty. — *ABP*, 3-8-34.

More about Class War

277. The correspondent is wrong in suggesting that I do not believe in the existence of class struggle. What I do not believe in is the necessity of fomenting and keeping it up. I entertain a growing belief that it is perfectly possible to avoid it. There is no virtue in fomenting it, as there is in preventing it. The conflict between monied classes and labourers is merely seeming. When labour is intelligent enough to organize itself and learns to act as one man, it will have the same weight as money if not much greater. The conflict is really between intelligence and unintelligence.

Surely it will be folly to keep up such a conflict. Unintelligence must be removed.

Money has its use as much as labour. After all money is a token of exchange. A person having 25 rupees has say 50 labourers per day at his disposal, regarding 8 as. as the wage for a day of eight hours. A labourer who has 49 fellow labourers working in unison with him is even with the person who has Rs. 25. The advantage, if any, will be with the one who has monopoly of labour. If both are even there will be harmony. The problem therefore is not to set class against class, but to educate labour to a sense of its dignity. Monied men after all form a microscopic minority in the world. They will act on the square, immediately labour realizes its power and yet acts on the square. To inflame labour against monied men is to perpetuate class hatred and all the evil consequences flowing from it. The strife is a vicious circle to be avoided at any cost. It is an admission of weakness, a sign of inferiority complex. The moment labour recognizes its own dignity, money will find its rightful place, i. e. it will be held in trust for labour. For labour is more than money.—*H*, 16-10-45, 285.

Liquidating Class Interests by Conversion

278. Exploitation of the poor can be extinguished not by effecting the destruction of a few millionaires, but by removing the ignorance of the poor and teaching them to non-co-operate with their exploiters. That will convert the exploiters also. I have even suggested that ultimately it will lead to both being equal partners. Capital as such is not evil; it is its wrong use that is evil. Capital in some form or other will always be needed. —*H*, 28-7-40, 219.

279. The money-lender who is inevitable today will gradually eliminate himself.

Q. But what about the zamindar ? Would you eliminate him ? Would you destroy him ?

A. I do not want to destroy the zamindar, but neither do I feel that the zamindar is inevitable. I expect to convert the zamindars and other capitalists by the non-violent method, and therefore there is for me nothing like an inevitability

of class conflict. For it is an essential part of non-violence to go along the line of least resistance. The moment the cultivators of the soil realize their power, the zamindari evil will be sterilized. What can the poor zamindar do when they say that they will simply not work the land unless they are paid enough to feed and clothe and educate themselves and their children in a decent manner. In reality the toiler is the owner of what he produces. If the toilers intelligently combine, they will become an irresistible power. That is how I do not see the necessity of class conflict. If I thought it inevitable, I should not hesitate to preach it and teach it. — *H*, 5-12-36, 338.

280. (Speaking to the vast crowd gathered at the public meeting at Brindaban, Bihar, Gandhiji said:)

I believe that the land you cultivate should belong to you, but it cannot be your own all at once, you cannot force it from the zamindars. Non-violence is the only way, consciousness of your own power is the only way. — *H*, 20-5-39, 133.

281. Real socialism has been handed down to us by our ancestors who taught: 'All land belongs to Gopal, where then is the boundary line? Man is the maker of that line and he can therefore unmake it.' Gopal literally means shepherd; it also means God. In modern language it means the State i. e. the People. That the land today does not belong to the people is too true. But the fault is not in the teaching. It is in us who have not lived up to it.

I have no doubt that we can make as good an approach to it as is possible for any nation, not excluding Russia, and that without violence. The most effective substitute for violent dispossession is the wheel with all its implications. Land and all property is his who will work it. Unfortunately the workers are or have been kept ignorant of this simple fact.

Continuous unemployment has induced in the people a kind of laziness which is most depressing. Thus whilst the alien rule is undoubtedly responsible for the growing pauperism of the people, we are more responsible for it. If the middle-class people, who betrayed their trust and bartered away the economic independence of India for a mess of

pottage, would now realize their error and take the message of the wheel to the villagers and induce them to shed their laziness and work at the wheel, we can ameliorate the condition of the people to a great extent. — *H*, 2-1-37, 375.

282. I am not ashamed to own that many capitalists are friendly towards me and do not fear me. They know that I desire to end capitalism almost, if not quite, as much as the most advanced socialist or even communist. But our methods differ, our languages differ. My theory of 'trusteeship' is no make-shift, certainly no camouflage. I am confident that it will survive all other theories. It has the sanction of philosophy and religion behind it. That possessors of wealth have not acted up to the theory does not prove its falsity; it proves the weakness of the wealthy. No other theory is compatible with non-violence. In the non-violent method the wrong-doer compasses his own end, if he does not undo the wrong. For, either through non-violent non-co-operation he is made to see his error, or he finds himself completely isolated. — *H*, 16-12-39, 376.

For the Princes

283. A kind of nervousness creeps over me as I think of the Princes of India, although I have the privilege of knowing many and some even intimately. My nervousness arises from the painful knowledge that they are a creation of the British rulers. Though some of them pre-existed before the British advent, their existence thereafter depended solely on British goodwill, which in its turn depended upon the price the then incumbents paid for that commodity. The present incumbents are sole creation of the Imperial Power. Its simple frown can undo them.

But they need not feel so helpless if they could consider themselves as an integral part of the nation instead of being, as they are, an integral part of the Imperial machine. If the machine topples they may disappear unless they become part of and depend upon the nation.

The Empire is going either by the will of the British people or by the force of circumstances beyond their control. India shall not always be a slave country. Will the Princes

march with the times or must they remain tied to the Imperial chariot-wheel ? If they take their courage in both their hands and make common cause with the nation they can run the risk of dispossession.

This I admit is a heroic step. They can adopt the middle course. They may earn the goodwill of their people by sharing their powers with them. They will never be able to retain their absolutism for all time. But they may certainly hope to retain much if they can secure the contentment and active co-operation of the people within their jurisdiction, in the administration of their own affairs. I think it is wrong of the Princes to let their critics say of their people that they are too backward to deserve freedom. It is a reflection on them. The people in the States belong to the same stock as those outside their borders. The Princes can lose nothing by being liberal. And they can lose everything by holding on to their autocracy.

For my part I desire not abolition, but conversion of their autocracy into trusteeship, not in name but in reality. The arbitrary powers they enjoy should go. The liberty of the people should not depend upon the will of an individual however noble and ancient may be his descent. Nor can any person, whether prince or a princely zamindar or merchant, be the sole owner and disposer of possessions hereditary or self-acquired. Every individual must have the fullest liberty to use his talents consistently with equal use by his neighbours but no one is entitled to the arbitrary use of the gains from the talents. He is part of the nation or say the social structure surrounding him. Therefore he can only use his talents not for self only but for the social structure of which he is but a part and on whose sufferance he lives. The present inequalities are surely due to people's ignorance. With a growing knowledge of their natural strength, the inequalities must disappear. If the revolution is brought about by violence the position will be reversed, but not altered for the better. With non-violence, i. e. conversion, the new era which people hope for must be born. My approach and appeal are in terms of non-violence pure and undefiled. The French have a noble motto in Liberty,

Equality, Fraternity. It is a heritage not for the French only but for all mankind.

What the French never realized is open to us to do. Will the Princes and the princely land-holders and merchants take the lead? It is for them to take the lead not for the have-nots, who have nothing to share with anybody except their pauperism and abjectness. I am addressing weekly appeals to the British Power. They are made exactly in the same friendly spirit as this is. The British may not respond. If the haves, who are in fact the pillars on which the mighty British Power rests, can realize their obvious duty, the British Power must yield. It was because I had despaired of response from the pillars, that I have thought of moving the masses on whom the pillars rest. I may not leave a single stone unturned to avoid, if I can, what is undoubtedly a great risk. Hence this appeal. — *H*, 2-8-42, 249.

VIII

THE CONGRESS IN RELATION TO THE CLASSES AND THE MASSES

The Character of the Congress

284. I do not consider the Congress as a party organization, even as the British Parliament, though it contains all parties, and has one party or other dominating it from time to time, is not a party organization. I shall venture to hope that all parties will cherish the Congress as a national organization providing a platform for all parties to appeal to the Nation, with a view to moulding its policy, and I would endeavour so to mould the policy of the League* as to make the Congress retain its no-party national character. — *Sita*, 326.

285. The Congress represents the whole of India. The Congress from its very inception has not been of any particular groove or any particular colour or caste or of any particular province. It has claimed, ever since its birth, to represent

* The Home Rule League of which he had become President after Mrs. Annie Besant.

the whole nation and on your behalf I have made the claim that you represent not only the registered members of the Congress but the entire nation. (A.I.C.C. speech of 8-8-42) — *ABP*, 9-8-42.

286. Let us understand the functions of the Congress. For internal growth and administration it is as good a democratic organization as any to be found in the world. But this democratic organization has been brought into being to fight the greatest imperialist power living. For this external work, therefore, it has to be likened to an army. As such, it ceases to be democratic. The Central authority possesses plenary powers, enabling it to impose and enforce discipline on the various units working under it . . . .

It has been suggested that, whilst my thesis holds good when there is active war in the shape of civil resistance going on, it cannot, whilst the latter remains under suspension. But suspension of Civil Disobedience does not mean suspension of war. The latter can only end when India has a constitution of her making. Till then, the Congress must be in the nature of an army.

Therefore, the Congress, conceived as a fighting machine, has to centralize control and guide every department and every Congressman, however highly placed, and expect unquestioned obedience. The fight cannot be fought on any other terms. They say this is fascism, pure and simple; but they forget that fascism is the naked sword. Under it . . . should lose his head. The Congress is the very antithesis of fascism, because it is based on non-violence pure and undefiled. Its sanctions are all moral. Its authority is not derived from the control of panoplied Black-Shirts.

That is the glory and strength of the Congress, not its weakness. Its authority is derived from that non-violent attitude. It is the only purely non-violent political organization of importance, to my knowledge, throughout the world. And let it continue to be the boast of the Congress that it can command the willing and hearty obedience from its followers, so long as they choose to belong to it. — A.I.C.C. bulletin on *C. P. Ministerial Crisis* (1937-38), 71-81.

Representing the Masses

287. The Congress must cease to be a debating society of talented lawyers who do not leave their practice, but it must consist of producers and manufacturers, and those who would understand them, nurse them and voice their feelings. Practising lawyers can help by becoming silent workers and donors. I sympathize with them for their desire to be in the limelight. But I would urge them to recognize their limitations. — *YI*, 11-8-21, 252.

288. The Congress must progressively represent the masses. They are as yet untouched by politics. They have no political consciousness of the type our politicians desire. Their politics are confined to bread and salt — I dare not say butter, for millions do not know the taste of ghee or even oil. Their politics are confined to communal adjustments. It is right however to say that we the politicians do represent the masses in opposition to the Government. But if we begin to use them before they are ready, we shall cease to represent them. We must first come in living touch with them by working for them and in their midst. We must share their sorrows, understand their difficulties and anticipate their wants. With the *pariahs* we must be *pariahs* and see how we feel to clean the closets of the upper classes and have the remains of their table thrown at us. We must see how we like being in the boxes, miscalled houses, of the labourers of Bombay. We must identify ourselves with the villagers who toil under the hot sun beating on their bent backs and see how we would like to drink water from the pool in which the villagers bathe, wash their clothes and pots and in which their cattle drink and roll. Then and not till then shall we truly represent the masses and they will, as surely as I am writing this, respond to every call.

'We cannot all do this, and if we are to do this, good-bye to Swaraj for a thousand years and more,' some will say. I shall sympathize with the objection. But I do claim that some of us at least will have to go through the agony and out of it only will a nation full, vigorous and free be born. — *YI*, 11-9-24, 300.

Interest of the Masses Supreme

289. I may tell you that the Congress does not belong to any particular group of men. It belongs to all; but the protection of the poor peasantry, which forms the bulk of the population, must be its primary interest. The Congress must, therefore, truly represent the poor. But that does not mean that all other classes — the middle classes, the capitalists or zamindars — must go under. All that it aims at is that all other classes must subscribe to the interest of the poor.

To me Hind Swaraj is the rule of all the people, is the rule of justice. — *YI*, 16-4-31, 79, 78.

290. Let there be no mistake as to what Purna Swaraj means to the Congress. It is full economic freedom for the toiling millions. It is no unholy alliance with any interest for their exploitation. — *YI*, 16-4-31, 77.

291. I will therefore state the purpose. It is complete freedom from alien yoke in every sense of the term, and this for the sake of the dumb millions. Every interest, therefore, that is hostile to their interest, must be revised or must subside if it is not capable of revision. — *YI*, 17-9-31, 263.

Under Swaraj

292. I am afraid that for years to come India would be engaged in passing legislation in order to raise the downtrodden, the fallen, from the mire into which they have been sunk by the capitalists, by the landlords, by the so-called higher classes, and then, subsequently and scientifically, by the British rulers. If we are to lift these people from the mire, then it would be the bounden duty of the National Government of India, in order to set its house in order, continually to give preference to these people and even free them from the burdens under which they are being crushed. And, if the landlords, zamindars, monied men and those who are today enjoying privileges — I do not care whether they are Europeans or Indians — if they find that they are discriminated against, I shall sympathize with them, but I will not be able to help them, even if I could possibly do so, because I would seek their assistance in that process,

and without their assistance it would not be possible to raise these people out of the mire.

Look at the condition, if you will, of the untouchables, if the law comes to their assistance and sets apart miles of territory. At the present moment they hold no land; they are absolutely living at the mercy of the so-called higher castes, and also, let me say, at the mercy of the State. They can be removed from one quarter to another without complaint and without being able to seek the assistance of law. Well, the first act of the Legislature will then be to see that in order somewhat to equalize conditions, these people are given grants freely.

From whose pockets are those grants to come? Not from the pockets of Heaven. Heaven is not going to drop money for the sake of the State. They will naturally come from the monied classes, including the Europeans.

It will be, therefore, a battle between the haves and have-nots: and if that is what is feared, I am afraid the National Government will not be able to come into being if all the classes hold the pistol at the head of the dumb millions and say: 'You shall not have a Government of your own unless you guarantee our possessions and our rights.'

I have got another formula also, hurriedly drafted because I drafted it here as I was listening to Lord Reading and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. It is in connection with existing rights:

> "No existing interest legitimately acquired and not being in conflict with the best interests of the nation in general, shall be interfered with except in accordance with the law applicable to such interests."

I certainly have in mind what you find in the Congress resolution in connection with the taking over by the incoming Government of obligations that are being today discharged by the British Government. Just as we claim that these obligations must be examined by an impartial tribunal before they are taken over by us, so should existing interests be subject to judicial scrutiny when necessary. There is no question, therefore, of repudiation but merely of taking over under examination under audit. We have

here some of us who have made a study of the privileges and monopolies enjoyed by the Europeans, but let it not be merely Europeans: there are Indians — I have undoubtedly several Indians in mind — who are today in possession of land which has been practically given away to them not for any service rendered to the nation but for some service rendered, I cannot even say to the Government, because I do not think that the Government has benefited, but to some official; and if you tell me that those concessions and those privileges are not to be examined by the State, I again tell you that it will be impossible to run the machinery of Government on behalf of the have-nots, on behalf of the dispossessed. Hence, you will see that there is nothing stated here in connection with the Europeans. The second formula also is applicable equally to the Europeans as it is applicable to Indians, as it is applicable, say, to Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas and Sir Pheroze Sethna. If they have obtained concessions which have been obtained because they did some service to the officials of the day and got some miles of land, well, if I had the possession of the Government I would quickly dispossess them. I would not consider them because they are Indians, and I would just as readily dispossess Sir Hubert Carr or Mr. Benthall, however admirable they are and however friendly they are to me. The law will be no respecter of persons whatsoever. I give you that assurance. I am unable to go any further. So, that is really what is implied by 'legitimately acquired' — that every interest must have been taintless, it must be above suspicion, like Caesar's wife, and therefore, we shall expect to examine all these things when they come under the notice of the Government

Then you have 'not being in conflict with the best interests of the nation'. I have in mind certain monopolies legitimately acquired, undoubtedly, but which have been brought into being in conflict with the best interests of the nation. Let me give you an illustration which will amuse you somewhat, but which is on natural ground. Take this white elephant which is called New Delhi. Crores have been spent upon it. Suppose that the future Government comes to the

conclusion that seeing that we have got this white elephant it ought to be turned to some use. Imagine that in Old Delhi there is a plague or cholera going on, and we want hospitals for the poor people. What are we to do? Do you suppose that the National Government will be able to build hospitals, and so on? Nothing of the kind. We will take charge of those buildings and put these plague-stricken people in them and use them as hospitals, because I contend that those buildings are in conflict with the best interests of the nation. They do not represent the millions of India. They may be representative of the monied men who are sitting here at the table; they may be representative of His Highness the Nawab Sahib of Bhopal, or of Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas, or of Sir Pheroze Sethna, or of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, but they are not representative of those who lack even a place to sleep and have not even a crust of bread to eat. If the National Government comes to the conclusion that that place is unnecessary, no matter what interests are concerned, they will be dispossessed, and they will be dispossessed, I may tell you, without any compensation, because, if you want this Government to pay compensation it will have to rob Peter and pay Paul, and that would be impossible.

It is a bitter pill which has got to be swallowed if a Government, as Congress conceives it, comes into being. In order to take away something from here, I have no desire to deceive you into the belief that everything will be quite all right. I want, on behalf of the Congress, to lay all the cards on the table. I want no mental reservation of any description whatsoever; and then, if the Congress position is acceptable, nothing will please me better, but, if today I feel I cannot possibly touch your hearts and cannot carry you with me, then the Congress must continue to wander and must continue the process of proselytization until you are all converted and allow the millions of India to feel that at last they have got a National Government. — *NV*, 71.

The Question of the States

293. I have often declared that the Congress should generally adopt a policy of non-interference with regard to

questions affecting Indian States. At a time when the people of British India are fighting for their own freedom, for them to interfere with the affairs of the Indian States would only be to betray impotence. Just as the Congress clearly cannot have any effective voice in the relation between Indian States and the British Government, even so will its interference be ineffective as to the relations between the Indian States and their subjects. Still the people in British India as well as in the Indian States are one, for India is one.

I am firmly of opinion that so long as British India is not free, so long as the people of British India have not attained real power, that is to say, so long as British India has not the power of self-expression, in a word, so long as British India does not obtain Swaraj, so long will India, British as well as Native remain in a distracted condition. The existence of a third power depends upon a continuance of such distraction. We can put our house in order only when British India has attained Swaraj.

I have therefore often said that the liberation of British India spells the liberation of the States as well. When the auspicious day of the freedom of British India arrives, the relation of the ruler and the ruled in the Indian States will not cease but will be purified. Swaraj as conceived by me does not mean the end of kingship. I have staked my all in the movement of Swaraj in the hope that Swaraj is a certain cure for all maladies. As darkness vanishes at sunrise, so when the sun of Swaraj rises, the dark anarchy of the rulers as well as of the subjects will disappear in an instant.

If the institution of kingship has a moral basis, princes are not independent proprietors but only trustees of their subjects for revenue received from them. It can therefore be spent by them only as trust money. It may be said that this principle has been almost completely carried out in the English Constitution. Abubaker and Hazrat Umar collected revenue running into crores and yet personally they were as good as *fakirs*. They received not a pie from the Public Treasury. They were ever watchful to see that the people got justice. It was their principle that one may not play false even with the enemy but must deal justly with him.

That prince is acceptable to me who becomes a prince among his people's servants. The subjects are the real master. But what is the servant to do if the master goes to sleep? Everything, therefore, is included in trying for a true national awakening.

In my humble opinion I have done my duty by the Princes in saying a few words about them. A word now to the people. The popular saying, 'As is the king, so are the people', is only a half truth. That is to say, it is not more true than its converse, 'As are the people, so is the prince.' Where the subjects are watchful a prince is entirely dependent upon them for his status. Where the subjects are overtaken by sleepy indifference, there is every possibility that the Prince will cease to function as a protector and become an oppressor instead. Those who are not wide awake have no right to blame their prince. The Prince as well as the people are mostly creatures of circumstances. Enterprising princes and peoples mould circumstances for their own benefit. Manliness consists in making circumstances subservient to ourselves. Those who will not heed themselves perish. To understand this principle is not to be impatient, not to reproach Fate, not to blame others. He who understands the doctrine of self-help blames himself for failure. It is on this ground that I object to violence. If we blame others where we should blame ourselves and wish for or bring about their destruction, that does not remove the root cause of the disease which, on the contrary, sinks all the deeper for the ignorance thereof.

We then see that the people themselves are as responsible as and even more responsible than the Princes for the defects pointed out by me. If public opinion is opposed to a particular line of action, it should be impossible for the Prince to adopt it. Opposition here does not mean merely inaudible murmur. Public opposition is effective only where there is strength behind it.

Such being my ideal there is room for Indian States in Swaraj as conceived by me and there is full protection guaranteed to the subjects for their rights. The true source of rights is duty. I have therefore spoken only about the duties of Princes as well as the peoples. I have not dealt

with the questions of the ideal constitution for the States as you alone can be its fashioners. My duty lies in discovering and employing means by which the nation may evolve the strength to enforce its will. When once the nation is conscious of its strength it will find its own way or make it.— (Extracts from the speech delivered as President of the Kathiawad Political Conference) — *YI*, 8-1-25, 9.

294. I disclaim any undue partiality for the States. At the same time I owe them no grudge; I do not desire their destruction. There is an abundant scope for reform in them which it should not be impossible to effect today. But it is my firm belief that it is impossible to reform the States in the true sense while India is in bondage. It may be possible to obtain redress here and there in cases of flagrant injustice by leading a crusade against them. But such tinkering does not interest me. It gives me no satisfaction. I am therefore today concentrating all my energy on the root evil. If I can effectively touch the root, the branches will in time drop down of their own accord, whereas, on the contrary, to divert public attention from the root evil and mobilize it against the branch evils in the States would mean lending an additional lease of life to the former. That is a risk that I for one am not prepared to run.

Let no one, however, understand me to mean from this that no action whatsoever is at present possible in the case of the States. I shall repeat here what I have already said. Wherever the subjects of the States are ready for it they can and ought to organize an agitation against maladministration in that State, especially if they have the strength to make use of the never-failing weapon of *Satyagraha*. But it is a matter of deep sorrow to me that today the ruled are often the tools in the hand of the wicked rulers. Grinding oppression has rendered the people nerveless. No one has yet been able to save goats from the clutches of tigers. The goats' emancipation would be possible only if one could envisage the goat-world itself giving birth to its would-be emancipator. Though reduced to the position of the goat, as man is today in this country, especially in the States, all hope is not lost for him. He belongs to a higher species. Strength lies dormant in the

weak. If they find an environment in which bipeds exactly like them exhibit strength, it is not unlikely that they will catch the infection. Bardoli was only a modest forerunner, a beam from the powerful sun. If Bardoli exhibited the full strength and qualifications necessary for full *Satyagraha*, its example would spread throughout the length and breadth of the land, and we should find ourselves including the people of the States a free nation. (Translated from *Navajivan* by P.) — *YI*, 29-8-29, 282.

Two Significant Pronouncements

295. It is the privilege and the duty of a Hindu prince to propound religious codes which are not inconsistent with the fundamental principles of Hinduism as derived from the *Vedas* and which are demanded by the spirit of the time. This must be true of all the progressive and living religions. If the Brahmanical spirit was restored, princes would be *rishis*, who would take from the revenues the honest minimum necessary to support them as a commission for their labours on behalf of the ryots, and hold their revenue in trust for the ryots. They would not have private property as they possess today and feel independent of their ryots and their wishes. — *H*, 21-11-36, 324.

296. The almost simultaneous awakening in the various States is a very significant event in the national struggle for independence. It will be wrong to think that such awakening can be due to the instigation of one person or a body of persons or any organization. It is just possible that the Haripura resolution of the Congress put the people of the States on their mettle and they realized as never before that their salvation depended upon their own labours. But above all, it is the time spirit that has brought about the awakening. It is to be hoped that the Princes and their advisers will recognize it and meet the legitimate aspirations of the people. There is no half-way house between total extinction of the States and the Princes making their people responsible for the administration of their States and themselves becoming trustees for the people, taking an earned commission for their labours. — *H*, 3-12-38, 260.

IX

POLITICAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

The Right to Govern Oneself

297. We must be content to die, if we cannot live as free men and women. — *YI*, 5-1-22, 5.

298. As every country is fit to eat, to drink and to breathe, even so is every nation fit to manage its own affairs, no matter how badly. — *YI*, 15-10-31, 305.

The Ideal of Anarchism

299. Self-government means continuous effort to be independent of government control whether it is foreign government or whether it is national. Swaraj government will be a sorry affair if people look up to it for the regulation of every detail of life. — *YI*, 6-8-25, 276.

What is Swaraj for India ?

300. By Swaraj I mean the government of India by the consent of the people as ascertained by the largest number of the adult population, male or female, native born or domiciled, who have contributed by manual labour to the service of the State and who have taken the trouble of having their names registered as voters. I hope to demonstrate that real Swaraj will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when abused. In other words, Swaraj is to be attained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority.— *YI*, 29-1-25, 40.

301. Mere withdrawal of the English is not independence. It means the consciousness in the average villager that he is the maker of his own destiny, he is his own legislator through his chosen representative. — *YI*, 13-2-30, 52.

302. We have long been accustomed to think that power comes only through Legislative Assemblies. I have regarded this belief as a grave error brought about by inertia or hypnotism. A superficial study of British History has made us think that all power percolates to the people from parliaments. The truth is that power resides in the people and

it is entrusted for the time being to those whom they may choose as their representatives. Parliaments have no power or even existence independently of the people. It has been my effort for the last twentyone years to convince the people of this simple truth. Civil Disobedience is the storehouse of power. Imagine a whole people unwilling to conform to the laws of the legislature, and prepared to suffer the consequences of non-compliance. They will bring the whole legislative and executive machinery to a standstill. The police and the military are of use to coerce minorities however powerful they may be. But no police or military coercion can bend the resolute will of a people, out for suffering to the uttermost. — *CP*, 5.

303. By political independence I do not mean an imitation of the British House of Commons, or the Soviet rule of Russia or the Fascist rule of Italy or the Nazi rule of Germany. They have systems suited to their genius. We must have ours suited to ours. What that can be is more than I can tell. I have described it as *Ramaraj* i. e. sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority. — *H*, 2-1-37, 374.

The Right of Minorities

304. The rule of majority has a narrow application, i. e. one should yield to the majority in matters of detail. But it is slavery to be amenable to the majority, no matter what its decisions are. Democracy is not a state in which people act like sheep. Under democracy individual liberty of opinion and action is jealously guarded. I therefore believe that the minority has a perfect right to act differently from the majority as long as it does not act in the name of the Congress. — *YI*, 2-3-22, 129.

305. In matters of conscience the law of majority has no place. — *YI*, 4-8-20, *Tagore*, 318.

306. The vision that Joseph (Mr. George Joseph) puts before us of an armed government bending a minority to its will by a clatter of arms, is a negation of the democratic spirit and progress. If that is the promise of the new programme, we have the armed coercion even now, not indeed

of a mere minority but of an overwhelming majority. What we want, I hope, is a government not based on coercion even of a minority but on its conversion. If it is a change from white military rule to a brown, we hardly need make any fuss. At any rate the masses then do not count. They will be subject to the same spoliation as now if not even worse. — *YI*, 19-12-29, 412.

Condition of the Masses under Swaraj

307. The Swaraj of my dream is the poor man's Swaraj. The necessaries of life should be enjoyed by you in common with those enjoyed by the princes and the monied men. But that does not mean that you should have palaces like theirs. They are not necessary for happiness. You or I would be lost in them. But, you ought to get all the ordinary amenities of life that a rich man enjoys. I have not the slightest doubt that Swaraj is not *Purna* Swaraj until these amenities are guaranteed to you under it. —*YI*, 26-3-31, 46.

Swaraj for the Good of All

308. The Swaraj of my dream recognizes no race or religious distinction. Nor is it to be the monopoly of the latter persons nor yet of monied men. Swaraj is to be for all, including the former, but emphatically including the maimed, the blind, the starving, toiling millions. —

What of the West?

309. I feel that fundamentally the disease is the same in Europe as it is in India, in spite of the fact that in the former country the people enjoy political self-government. No mere transference of political power in India will satisfy my ambition, even though I hold such transference to be a vital necessity of Indian national life. The people of Europe have no doubt political power but no Swaraj. Asian and African races are exploited for their partial benefit, and they, on their part, are being exploited by the ruling class or caste under the sacred name of democracy. At the root, therefore, the disease appears to be the same as in India. The same remedy is, therefore, likely to be

applicable. Shorn of all camouflage, the exploitation of the masses of Europe is sustained by violence.

Violence on the part of the masses will never remove the disease. Anyway up to now experience shows that success of violence has been short-lived. It has led to greater violence. What has been tried hitherto has been a variety of violence and artificial checks dependent mainly upon the will of the violent. At the crucial moment these checks have naturally broken down. It seems to me, therefore, that sooner or later, the European masses will have to take to non-violence if they are to find their deliverance. That there is no hope of their taking to it in a body and at once does not baffle me. A few thousand years are but a speck in the vast time circle. Someone has to make a beginning with a faith that will not flinch. I doubt not that the masses, even of Europe, will respond, but what is more emergent in point of time is not so much a large experiment in non-violence as a precise grasp of the meaning of deliverance. — *YI*, 3-9-25, 304.

Why National Independence before International Co-operation

310. You want co-operation between nations for the salvaging of civilization. I want it too, but co-operation presupposes free nations worthy of co-operation. If I am to help in creating or restoring peace and goodwill and resist disturbances thereof, I must have the ability to do so and I cannot do so unless my country has come to its own. At the present moment, the very movement for freedom in India is India's contribution to peace. For so long as India is a subject nation, not only is she a danger to peace, but also England which exploits India. Other nations may tolerate today England's imperialist policy and her exploitation of other nations, but they certainly do not appreciate it; and they would gladly help in the prevention of England becoming a greater and greater menace every day. Of course you will say that India free can become a menace herself. But let us assume that she will behave herself with her doctrine of non-violence, if she achieves her freedom through

it and for all her bitter experiences of being a victim of exploitation. — *YI*, 12-11-31, 353.

India in the Council of Nations

311. My notion of *Purna* Swaraj is not isolated independence but healthy and dignified interdependence. My nationalism, fierce though it is, is not exclusive, not designed to harm any nation or individual. Legal maxims are not so legal as they are moral. I believe in the eternal truth of '*sic utere tuo ut alienum non lœdas*' (Use thy own property so as not to injure thy neighbour's). — *YI*, 26-3-31, 51.

312. Our nationalism can be no peril to other nations inasmuch as we will exploit none just as we will allow none to exploit us. Through Swaraj we would serve the whole world. — *YI*, 16-4-31, 79.

313. Our non-co-operation is neither with the English nor with the West. Our non-co-operation is with the system the English have established, with the material civilization and its attendant greed and exploitation of the weak. Our non-co-operation is a retirement within ourselves. Our non-co-operation is a refusal to co-operate with the English administrators on their own terms. We say to them, 'Come and co-operate with us on our terms and it will be well for us, for you and the world.' We must refuse to be lifted off our feet. A drowning man cannot save others. In order to be fit to save others, we must try to save ourselves. Indian nationalism is not exclusive, nor aggressive, nor destructive. It is health-giving, religious and therefore humanitarian. India must learn to live before she can aspire to die for humanity. — *YI*, 13-10-21, 326.

314. I would like to see India free and strong so that she may offer herself as a willing and pure sacrifice for the betterment of the world. The individual, being pure, sacrifices himself for the family, the latter for the village, the village for the district, the district for the province, the province for the nation, the nation for all. — *YI*, 17-9-25, 321.

Ideal of National Interdependence

315. The better mind of the world desires today not absolutely independent States warring one against another

but a federation of friendly interdependent States. The consummation of that event may be far off. I want to make no grand claim for our country. But I see nothing grand or impossible about our expressing our readiness for universal interdependence rather than independence. I desire the ability to be totally independent without asserting the independence. — *YI*, 26-12-24, 425.

316. Nor have I the slightest difficulty in agreeing with you in these days of rapid intercommunication and growing consciousness of oneness of all mankind, we must recognize that our nationalism must not be inconsistent with progressive internationalism. India cannot stand in isolation and unaffected by what is going on in other parts of the world. We should therefore range ourselves with the progressive forces of the world. —*ABP*, 17-9-33.

Offers of Co-operation with Britain

317. Q. How far would you cut India off from the Empire ?

A. From the Empire entirely; from the British nation, not at all, if I want India to gain and not to grieve. The British Empire is an Empire only because of India. That Emperorship must go and I should love to be an equal partner with Britain sharing her joys and sorrows. But it must be a partnership on equal terms.

Q. To what extent would India be prepared to share the sorrows of England ?

A. To the fullest extent.

Q. Do you think that India would unite her fortunes inextricably with Britain ?

A. Yes, so long as she remains a partner. But if she discovers that the partnership is like one between a giant and a dwarf or if it is utilized for the exploitation of the other races of the earth, she would dissolve it. The aim is the common good of all nations of the earth and if it cannot be achieved I have patience enough to wait for ages rather than patch up an unnatural partnership. — *YI*, 12-11-31, 356.

318. The partnership has to be on equal terms. It should not be 'subjection' in glorified language. That means

that the present relationship must be completely transformed though the connection may be retained, and that connection should be wholly and solely for the benefit of mankind. India by herself has no capacity to exploit the nations of the earth, but with Great Britain's assistance she can do it. Now the partnership must mean that exploitation shall cease, and if Great Britain should not desist from it, India should sever the connection. All that is wanted is a fundamental change in the British policy of exploitation. Britain cannot thereafter boast that she has a strong navy guarding the maritime highways and all her overseas commerce.

What about the South African possessions ? I would not insist on a transformation of Britain's relations with them, as a condition precedent to our partnership. But I should certainly strive to work for the deliverance of those South African races which, I can say from experience, are ground down under exploitation. Our deliverance must mean their deliverance. But, if that cannot come about, I should have no interest in a partnership with Britain, even if it were of benefit to India. Speaking for myself, I would say that the partnership, giving the promise of a world set free from exploitation, would be a proud privilege for my nation and I would maintain it for ever. But India cannot reconcile herself in any shape or form to any policy of exploitation and, speaking for myself, I may say that if ever the Congress should adopt an imperial policy I should sever my connection with the Congress. — *YI*, 19-11-31, 364.

X

INDIA'S FREEDOM : WAYS AND MEANS

319. There is no such thing as slow freedom. Freedom is like a birth. Till we are fully free, we are slaves. All birth takes place in a moment. — *YI*, 9-3-22, 148.

The Chief Obstacle

320. It is my certain conviction that no man loses his freedom except through his own weakness. — *IC*, 209.

321. It is not so much British guns that are responsible for our subjection as our voluntary co-operation. — *YI*, 9-2-21, 46.

322. Even the most despotic government cannot stand except for the consent of the governed which consent is often forcibly procured by the despot. Immediately the subject ceases to fear the despotic force, his power is gone. — *YI*, 30-6-20, *Tagore*, 225.

323. I do not believe in armed risings. They are a remedy worse than the disease sought to be cured. They are a token of the spirit of revenge and impatience and anger. The method of violence cannot do good in the long run. Witness the effect of the armed rising of the allied powers against Germany. Have they not become even like the Germans, as the latter have been depicted to us by them?

We have a better method. Unlike that of violence it certainly involves the exercise of restraint and patience; but it requires also resoluteness of will. This method is to refuse to be party to the wrong. No tyrant has ever yet succeeded in his purpose without carrying the victim with him, it may be, as it often is by force. Most people choose rather to yield to the will of the tyrant than to suffer for the consequence of resistance. Hence does terrorism form part of the stock-in-trade of the tyrant. But we have instances in history where terrorism has failed to impose the terrorist's will upon his victim. India has choice before her now. If then the acts of the Punjab Government be an insufferable wrong, if the report of Lord Hunter's Committee and the

two despatches be a greater wrong by reason of their grievous condonation of these acts, it is clear that we must refuse to submit to this official violence. Appeal the Parliament by all means if necessary, but if the Parliament fails us and if we are worthy to call ourselves a nation, we must refuse to uphold the Government by withdrawing co-operation from it. — *YI*, 9-6-20, *Tagore*, 80.

Constitutional Right of Non-co-operation

324. I venture to claim that I have succeeded by patient reasoning in weaning the party of violence from its ways. I confess that I did not — I did not attempt to succeed in weaning them from violence on moral grounds, but purely on utilitarian grounds. The result, for the time being at any rate, has, however, been to stop violence. I hold that no repression could have prevented a violent eruption, if the people had not had presented to them a form of direct action involving considerable sacrifice and ensuring success if such direct action was largely taken up by the public. Non-co-operation was the only dignified and constitutional form of such direct action. For it is the right recognized from time immemorial of the subject to refuse to assist a ruler who misrules. — *YI*, 30-6-20, *Tagore*, 168.

Swaraj and Self-purification

325. Our Non-co-operation refers not so much to the paralysis of a wicked government as to our being proof against wickedness. It aims therefore not at destruction but at construction. It deals with causes rather than with symptoms. — *YI*, 19-1-21, 19.

326. The primary motive of Non-co-operation is self-purification by withdrawing co-operation from an unrighteous and unrepentant government. The secondary object is to rid ourselves of the feeling of helplessness by being independent of all government control or supervision, i. e. to govern ourselves in all possible affairs, and, in fulfilling both the objects, to refrain from doing or promoting injury, or violence, to any individual or property. — *YI*, 6-4-21, 106.

327. It is because the rulers, if they are bad, are so, not necessarily or wholly by reason of birth, but largely because

of their environment, that I have hopes of their altering their course. It is perfectly true that the rulers cannot alter their course themselves. If they are dominated by their environment, they do not surely deserve to be killed, but should be changed by a change of environment. But the environment are we the people who make the rulers what they are. They are thus an exaggerated edition of what we are in the aggregate. If my argument is sound, any violence done to the rulers would be violence done to ourselves. It would be suicide. And since I do not want to commit suicide, nor encourage my neighbours to do so, I become non-violent myself and invite my neighbours to do likewise.

Moreover, violence may destroy one or more bad rulers, but like Ravana's head, others will pop up in their places, for, the root lies elsewhere. It lies in us. If we reform ourselves, the rulers will automatically do so. — *H*, 21-9-34, 250.

328. I am not interested in freeing India merely from the English yoke. I am bent upon freeing India from any yoke whatsoever. I have no desire to exchange 'king log for king stork'. Hence for me the movement of Swaraj is a movement of self-purification. — *YI*, 12-6-24, 195.

329. The reforms required are more from within than from without. A perfect constitution super-imposed upon a rotten internal condition will be like a whited sepulchre. — *YI*, 24-6-26, 226.

A Middle-class Revolution to Pave the Way for Revolution of the Masses

330. We cannot get Swaraj if not one class in the country is prepared to work and sacrifice for it. The Government will yield not to the logic of words. It knows no logic but that of brave and true deeds.

Bravery of the sword they know. And they have made themselves proof against its use by us. Many of them will welcome violence on our part. They are unconquerable in the art of meeting and suppressing violence. We propose, therefore, to sterilize their power of inflicting violence by our non-violence. Violence dies when it ceases to evoke response from its object. Non-violence is the corner-stone

of the edifice of non-co-operation. You will, therefore, not be hasty or overzealous in your dealings with those who may not see eye to eye with you. Intolerance is a species of violence and therefore against our creed. Non-violent non-co-operation is an object lesson in democracy. The moment we are able to ensure non-violence, even under circumstances the most provoking, that moment we have achieved our end, because that is the moment when we can offer complete non-co-operation.

I ask you not to be frightened at the proposition just stated. People do not move in arithmetical progression, not even in geometrical progression. They have been known to perish in a day: they have been known to rise in a day. Is it such a difficult thing for India to realize that thirty crores of human beings have but to feel their strength and they can be free without having to use it? As we had not regained national consciousness, the rulers have hitherto played us against one another. We have to refuse to do so, and we are masters, not they.

Non-co-operation deals first with those sensitive classes upon whom the Government has acted so successfully and who have been lured into the trap consciously or unconsciously as the school-going youths have been.

When we come to think about it, the sacrifice required is infinitesimal for an individual, because the whole is distributed among so many of us. For what is your sacrifice? To suspend your literary studies for one year or till Swaraj is established. If I could 'infect' the whole of the student world with my faith, I know that the suspension of studies need not extend even to a year. — *YI*, 19-1-21, 17.

331. The secret of non-violence and non-co-operation lies in our realizing, that it is through suffering that we are to attain our goal. What is the renunciation of titles, councils, law courts and schools but a measure (very slight indeed) of suffering? That preliminary renunciation is a prelude to the larger suffering — the hardships of a gaol life and even the final consummation on the gallows if need be. The more we suffer and the more of us suffer, the nearer we are to our cherished goal. — *YI*, 29-9-21, 310.

332. I do not merely rely upon the lawyer class or highly educated men to enable the Committee to carry out all the stages of non-co-operation. My hope lies more with the masses so far as the latter stages of non-co-operation are concerned. — *YI*, 18-8-20, *Tagore*, 370.

333. Surely it was necessary to remove the hallucination about titles, law courts, schools and councils. I venture to think that on the whole the nationalists have responded nobly in regard to these items. There are no titled men among them, no nationalist lawyer who has not suspended practice has any public status among non-co-operators, schools and colleges have furnished boys and girls who are now giving a good account of themselves and who, I make bold to say, will stagger humanity by their sacrifice when the time of their trial has arrived. Those who have refrained from entering the councils, are rendering, as all who care may see, a service which they could not have rendered in the council halls. The few who have given up their titles have shown the way to the others. All these are acting as leaven in the community. Now, there is little need for verbal propaganda among these special classes. The action and character of those who have renounced titles, schools, courts or councils, constitute propaganda more telling and effective than speeches.

To recall Lord Canning's words, under the blue and serene Indian sky a cloud no bigger than a man's thumb may appear on the horizon, but it may any moment assume dimensions unexpected by any, and no man can tell when it may burst. When India as a whole will respond by action, I cannot say. But this I do say that the educated classes to whom the Congress has appealed will one day — and probably during this year, — respond in the manner worthy of the nation.

But whether they do or not, the progress of the nation cannot be arrested by any person or class. The uneducated artisans, the women, the men in the street, are taking their share in the movement . . . The appeal to the educated classes paved the way for them. The goats had to be sifted from the sheep. The educated classes had to be put upon

their trial. The beginning had to be made by and through them. — *YI*, 20-4-21, 122.

334. We have not failed in our effort regarding the educated classes. I admit that the response in practice might have been greater from them. But I make bold to say that the vast majority of them are with us in spirit though the flesh being weak, they are not able to make what from their point of view is a sacrifice. We have been trying to act on the masses from the commencement. We regard them as our mainstay, for it is they who have to attain Swaraj. It is neither the sole concern of the monied men nor that of the educated class. Both must subserve their interest in any scheme of Swaraj, and as soon as the masses have attained sufficient self-control and learnt mass discipline we shall not hesitate if necessary to advise them to suspend payment of taxes to a Government that has never truly looked after their welfare and that has exploited and terrorized them every time they have shown the least symptom of rising against their exploitation. — *YI*, 20-4-21, 124.

The Price of Freedom

335. Swaraj can never be a free gift by one nation to another. It is a treasure to be purchased with a nation's best blood. Swaraj will be the fruit of incessant labour, suffering beyond measure. — *YI*, 5-1-22, 4.

336. I hold it to be our duty to tell the present generation and generations yet unborn that in our march towards true freedom we must be prepared for repetitions of the wrongs such as the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. We must provide against them, we must not seek them, but we must be ready to face them if they came again. I would not have us flinch from the battle of national life. — *YI*, 18-2-20, *Tagore*, 100.

337. Before we become a nation possessing an effective voice in the councils of nations, we must be prepared to contemplate with equanimity, not a thousand murders of innocent men and women but many thousands before we attain a status in the world that shall not be surpassed by any nation. — *YI*, 7-4-20, *Tagore*, 84.

Death, the Portal to Life Eternal

338. No country has ever risen without being purified through the force of suffering. The mother suffers so that her child may live. The condition of wheat growing is that the seed grain should perish. Life comes out of Death. Will India rise out of slavery without fulfilling this eternal law of purification through suffering ? —*YI*, 16-6-20.

339. Swaraj is the abandonment of the fear of death. If Swaraj is delayed, it is delayed because we are not prepared calmly to meet death and inconveniences less than death. — *YI*, 13-10-21, 326-7.

340. That nation is great which rests its head upon death as its pillow. Those who defy death are free from all fear. —*IHR*, 48.

341. A nation that is capable of limitless sacrifice is capable of rising to limitless heights. The purer the sacrifice, the quicker the progress. -- *YI*, 25-8-20, *Tagore*, 501.

Type of Work needed for India

342. In his fearsomeness, he does not see that to exchange British brute force for any other brute force is no real remedy for the ills of India. And if it is the steel that is to decide the issue, it must be not Sikh or Gurkha steel, it must be all-India steel. That is the one supreme lesson that Europe teaches. If it is brute force that is to rule, then the millions of India must learn the art of war, or must for ever remain prostrate at the feet of him who wields the sword, whether he is *paradesi* or *swadeshi*. The millions must remain 'dumb driven cattle'. Non-co-operation is an attempt to awaken the masses to a sense of their dignity and power. This can only be by enabling them to realize that they need not fear brute force, if they would but know the soul within. — *YI*, 1-12-20, *Tagore*, 330.

343. I contend that the revolutionary method cannot succeed in India. If an open warfare were a possibility, I may concede that we may tread the path of violence that the other countries have and at least evolve the qualities that bravery on the battlefield brings forth. But the attainment of Swaraj through warfare I hold an impossibility for any

time that we can foresee. Warfare may give us another rule for the English rule, but not self-rule in terms of the masses. The pilgrimage to Swaraj is a painful climb. It requires attention to details. It means vast organizing ability, it means penetration into the villages solely for the service of the villagers. In other words, it means national education i. e. education of the masses. It means an awakening of national consciousness among the masses. It will not spring like the magician's mango. It will grow almost unperceived like the banian tree. A bloody revolution will never perform the trick. Haste here is most certainly waste. — *YI*, 21-5-25, 178.

344. Surely Swaraj will not drop from the clouds. It will be the fruit of patience, perseverance, ceaseless toil, courage and an intelligent appreciation of the environment. — *YI*, 27-8-25, 297.

345. We have to grow by strenuous effort out of our bondage, whether it is Educational, Economical, Social or Political. The effort itself is three-fourths of the battle. — *H*, 9-7-38, 178.

Creed vs. Policy of Non-violence

346. I have not put before India the final form of non-violence. The non-violence that I have preached from Congress platforms is non-violence as a policy. But even policies require honest adherence in thought, word and deed. If I believe that honesty is the best policy, surely whilst I so believe, I must be honest in thought, word and deed, for otherwise I become an impostor. Non-violence being a policy means that it can upon due notice be given up when it proves unsuccessful or ineffective. But simple morality demands that whilst a particular policy is pursued, it must be pursued with all one's heart. It is simple policy to march along a certain route, but the soldier who marches with an unsteady step along that route is liable to be summarily dismissed. I become therefore incredulous when people talk to me sceptically about non-violence or are seized with fright at the very mention of the word non-violence. If they do not believe in the expedient of non-violence, they must denounce it but not claim to believe in the expedient

when their heart resists it. How disastrous it would be, if not believing in violence even as an expedient, I joined, say, a violence party and approached a gun with a perturbed heart! The reader will believe me when I say that I have the capacity for killing a fly. But I do not believe in killing even flies. Now suppose I joined an expedition for fly-killing as an expedient. Will I not be expected before being permitted to join the expedition to use all the available engines of destruction whilst I remained in the army of fly-killers? If those who are in the Congress and the Khilafat Committees will perceive this simple truth, we shall certainly either finish the struggle this year to a successful end or be so sick of non-violence as to give up the pretension and set about devising some other programme. — *YI*, 2-3-22, 130.

347. If the majority do not believe in the Congress *policy* of non-violence and truth, let them have the first article altered. Let us understand the distinction between policy and creed. A policy may be changed, a creed cannot. But either is as good as the other whilst it is held. Those therefore who hold non-violence only as a policy may not, without exposing themselves to the charge of dishonourable conduct, use the Congress membership as a cover for violence. I cannot get rid of the conviction, that the greatest obstacle to our progress towards Swaraj is our want of faith in our policy. — *YI*, 30-7-31, 195.

Violence to be matched by Non-violence

348. We have chosen a method that compels us to turn, each one of us, our face towards God. Non-co-operation presumes that our opponent with whom we non-co-operate resorts to methods which are as questionable as the purpose he seeks to fulfil by such methods. We shall therefore find favour in the sight of God only by choosing methods which are different in kind from those of our opponents. This is a big claim we have made for ourselves, and we can attain success within the short time appointed by us, only if our methods are in reality radically different from those of the Government.

Hence the foundation of our movement rests on complete non-violence, whereas violence is the final refuge of the Government. And as no energy can be created without resistance, our non-resistance to Government violence must bring the latter to a standstill. But our non-violence to be true, must be in word, thought and deed. It makes no difference that with you non-violence is an expedient. Whilst it lasts, you cannot consistently with your pledge harbour designs of violence. On the contrary we must have implicit faith in our programme of non-violence, which presupposes perfect accord between thought, word and deed. — *YI*, 29-9-21, 310.

The Means of Organization

(A) POLITICS AND SOCIAL REFORM

349. The sooner it is recognized that many of our social evils impede our march towards Swaraj, the greater will be our progress towards our cherished goal. To postpone social reform till after the attainment of Swaraj is not to know the meaning of Swaraj. — *YI*, 28-6-28, 216.

350. Q. Is it yet time for the youths of India to force a social reordering? Should it follow or precede any further political effort towards Swaraj?

A. The two things — the social reordering and the fight for political Swaraj — must go hand in hand. There can be no question of precedence, of division into watertight compartments here. But a new social order cannot be 'forced'; that would be a remedy worse than the disease. I am an impatient reformer. I am all for thorough-going, radical, social reordering; but it must be an organic growth, not a violent super-imposition. — *ABP*, 3-8-34.

(B) NATIONAL UNITY

351. What does unity consist in and how can it be best promoted? The answer is simple. It consists in our having a common purpose, a common goal and common sorrows. It is best promoted by co-operating to reach the common goal, by sharing one another's sorrows and by mutual toleration. — *YI*, 25-2-20, *Tagore*, 596.

352. The union that we want is not a patched up thing but a union of hearts based upon a definite recognition of the indubitable proposition that Swaraj for India must be an impossible dream without an indissoluble union between the Hindus and the Muslims of India. It must not be a mere truce. It must be a partnership between equals, each respecting the religion of the other. —*YI*, 6-10-20, *Tagore*, 583.

353. We have forgotten the divine art of dying for our faiths without retaliation, and we have equally forgotten the art of using force in self-defence at the peril of our lives. And Hindu-Muslim unity is nothing if it is not a partnership between brave men and women. We must trust each other always, but in the last resort we must trust ourselves and our God. —*YI*, 29-9-21, 307.

354. For good or for ill, the two communities are wedded to India, they are neighbours, sons of the soil. They are destined to die here as they are born here. Nature will force them to live in peace if they do not come together voluntarily. —*H*, 29-10-38, 308.

355. As a *satyagrahi* I believe in the absolute efficacy of full surrender. Numerically the Hindus happen to be the major community. But even if the Hindus were in a minority, as a *satyagrahi* and a Hindu I should say that the Hindus would lose nothing in the long run by full surrender. To this argument a retort has thoughtlessly been made, 'Why then do you not advise India to surrender to the English ? Give them the domination they want and be happy.' The hasty retort ignores the vital fact that I have not advised surrender to the bayonet. In the code of the *satyagrahi* there is no such thing as surrender to brute force. Or the surrender then is the surrender of suffering and not to the will of the wielder of the bayonet. A *satyagrahi's* surrender has to come out of his strength, not out of weakness. The surrender advised by me is not of honour but of earthly goods. There is no loss of honour in surrendering seats and positions of emolument. There is loss of honour in haggling about them. The law of surrender and suffering is a universal law admitting of no exceptions. —*YI*, 3-4-31, 92.

356. It would be a great thing, a brave thing, for the Hindus to achieve this act of self-denial. — *YI*, 12-3-31, 36.

357. My implicit faith in non-violence does mean yielding to minorities when they are really weak. The best way to weaken communalists is to yield to them. Resistance will only rouse their suspicion and strengthen their opposition. A *satyagrahi* resists when there is threat of force behind obstruction. I know that I do not carry the Congressmen in general with me in this what to me appears as very sensible and practical point of view. But if we are to come to Swaraj through non-violent means, I know that this point of view will be accepted. — *YI*, 2-7-31, 162.

358. There will never be equality so long as one feels inferior or superior to the other. There is no room for patronage among equals. — *YI*, 28-7-21, 236.

359. I have put untouchability in the forefront because I observe a certain remissness about it. Hindu non-co-operators may not be indifferent about it. We may be able to right the Khilafat wrong but we can never reach Swaraj, with the poison of untouchability corroding the Hindu part of the national body. Swaraj is a meaningless term, if we desire to keep a fifth of India under perpetual subjection, and deliberately deny to them the fruits of national culture. We are seeking the aid of God in this great purification movement, but we deny to the most deserving among His creatures the rights of humanity. Inhuman ourselves, we may not plead before the Throne for deliverance from the inhumanity of others. — *YI*, 25-5-21, 165.

360. It seems to have been represented that I am opposed to any representation of the untouchables on the legislatures. This is a travesty of the truth. What I have said and what I must repeat is that I am opposed to their special representation. I am convinced that this can do them no good and may do much harm. But the Congress is wedded to adult franchise. Therefore, millions of them can be placed on the voters' roll. It is impossible to conceive that with untouchability fast disappearing, nominees of these voters can be boycotted by the others. But what these people need more than election to the legislatures is protection

from social and religious persecution. Custom which is often more powerful than law, has brought them to a degradation of which every thinking Hindu has need to feel ashamed and to do penance. I should, therefore, have the most drastic legislation rendering criminal all the special persecution to which these fellow-countrymen of mine are subjected by the so-called superior classes. Thank God the conscience of the Hindu has been stirred, and untouchability will soon be a relic of our sinful past. —*NV*, 40.

(C) VILLAGE ORGANIZATION

361. Over 75 per cent of the population are agriculturists and Mr. Higginbotham told us last night in his own felicitous language that they are the men who grow two blades of grass in the place of one. But there cannot be much spirit of self-government about us if we take away or allow others to take away from them almost the whole of the results of their labour. Our salvation can only come through the farmer. Neither the lawyers, nor the doctors, nor the rich landlords are going to secure it. —(Speech at Benares, 4-2-16) —*Nat*, 323.

362. Our contact with them begins with their service through the spinning wheel, but it does not end there. The spinning wheel is the centre of that service. If you spend your next vacation in some far off village in the interior you will see the truth of my remark. You will find the people cheerless and fear-stricken. You will find houses in ruins. You will look in vain for any sanitary or hygienic conditions. You will find the cattle in a miserable way, and yet you will see idleness stalking there. The people will tell you of the spinning wheel having been in their homes long ago, but today they will entertain no talk of it or of any other cottage industry. They have no hope left in them. They live, for they cannot die at will. They will spin only if *you* spin. Even if a hundred out of a population of 300 in a village spin, you assure them of an additional income of Rs. 1,800 a year. You can lay the foundation of solid reform on this income in every village. It is easy I know to say this, but difficult to do. Faith can make it easy. 'I am alone, how can I reach seven hundred

thousand villages ?' —This is the argument that pride whispers to us. Start with the faith that if you fix yourself up in one single village and succeed, the rest will follow. Progress is then assured. —*YI*, 17-6-26, 217.

363. I have suggested Khaddar as indispensable for civil disobedience for Swaraj for two reasons. The first is that Swaraj I hold to be an impossibility without Khaddar becoming universal in our country. Secondly it is the most efficient aid to mass discipline without which mass civil disobedience is impossible. —*YI*, 12-6-24, 199.

364. Probably very few workers have noticed that progress of hand-spinning means the greatest voluntary co-operation among millions of human beings scattered over a very wide area and working for their daily bread. No doubt agriculture has required much co-operative effort, but hand-spinning requires still greater and more honest co-operation. Wheat grows more by nature's honesty than by man's. Manufacture of yarn in our cottages is dependent solely on human honesty. Hand-spinning is impossible without the willing and intelligent co-operation of millions of human beings. We have to arrive at a stage when the spinner like the grain-seller is assured of a steady market for his yarn as well as the supply of cotton slivers if he or she does not know the process of carding. Is it any wonder if I claim that hand-spinning can drive away as if by magic the growing pauperism of the masses? — *YI*, 3-11-21, 350.

365. The half a dozen modern cities are an excrescence, and serve at the present moment the evil purpose of draining the life-blood of the villages. Khaddar is an attempt to revise and reverse the process, and establish a better relation between the cities and the villages. The cities with their insolent torts are a constant menace to the life and liberty of the villagers.

Khaddar has the greatest organizing power in it because it has itself to be organized and because it affects all India. If Khaddar rained from heaven it would be a calamity. But as it can only be manufactured by the willing co-operation of starving millions and thousands of middle class men and women, its success means the best organization conceivable along peaceful lines. — *Is India Different?*, 23.

366. The chief thing that I want the members to consider is that, so far as the Sangh work was directed from the General Office, but henceforth the work is to be decentralized, and any province or district which wants to be autonomous, is to be allowed to do so. Workers must be prepared to go to organize such autonomous centres with the prestige and moral support of the Sangh. Workers will be paid for their maintenance for five years on an annually diminishing scale. They should work there according to the fundamental principles and policy laid down by the Sangh. It is not possible otherwise to decentralize the work in seven lakhs of villages.

There are two schools of thought current in the world. One wants to divide the world into cities and the other into villages. The village civilization and the city civilization are totally different things. One depends on machinery and industrialization, and the other on handicrafts. We have given preference to the latter.

After all, this industrialization and large scale production are only of comparatively recent growth. We don't know how far it has contributed to the development of our happiness, but we know this much that it has brought in its wake the recent world wars. This second world war is not still over, and even if it comes to an end, we are hearing of a third world war. Our country was never so unhappy and miserable as it is at present. City people may be getting big profits and good wages, but all that has become possible by sucking the blood of villages. We don't want to collect lakhs and crores. We don't always want to depend on money for our work. If we are prepared to sacrifice our lives for the cause, money is nothing. We must have faith and we must be true to ourselves. If we have these, we shall be able by decentralizing our capital of Rs. 30 lakhs in villages to create national wealth amounting to Rs. 300 crores. To do that main thing, what is necessary is to make the villages self-sufficient and self-reliant. But mind you, my idea of self-sufficiency is not a narrow one. There is no scope for selfishness and arrogance in my self-sufficiency.

I am not preaching isolation. We have to be humble as the dust for the fulfilment of our cause. We have to mix with people even as sugar mixes itself with milk. Though villagers will be self-sufficient so far as it is possible, they will devote their time also to their intellectual development for creation of consciousness for the contemplated non-violent society of the future.

Cloth stands second to food as matter of necessity. If every village begins to produce its own cloth, its strength will greatly be enhanced. But to achieve that we don't want to close down the textile factories by legislation. We want to achieve our purpose by revolutionizing the psychology of the people. By decentralizing, we want to produce cloth wherever cotton is grown.

But what of the city people who have taken to Khadi now? I would ask them to spin their own yarn and to find out for themselves weavers to weave that yarn into cloth. It is absurd that cloth should come from Manchester for those poor who produce cloth for the Bombay people. It is also not proper to compel the poor to accept part of their wages in the form of Khadi. They should be so educated that they may spin voluntarily and intelligently, and may use with love and pride the cloth produced by themselves. If the people of Bombay want to wear Khadi, they should spin for themselves or get their children and other dependents to spin. If the people, pledged to Khadi, spin for themselves, the practice will be contagious. Even if we are able to produce Khadi worth ten crores instead of one crore as at present, our object of reaching the whole of India will not be achieved. —*HS*, 6-12-44.

367. The only form of non-violent work to be done by the largest number of men, women and children of the land, in order to regain the lost trade with its attendant activities, is the spinning wheel. Thus conceived it easily becomes the symbol *par excellence* of non-violence. To be an instrument of Swaraj, naturally it must not flourish under the Government or any other patronage. It must flourish, if need be, even in spite of the resistance from the government or the capitalist who is interested in his

spinning and weaving mills. The spinning wheel represents the millions in the villages as against the classes represented by the mill owners and the like. — *Gram Udyog Patrika*, Aug. 1945.

368. The true building up of Swaraj consists in the millions of India wholeheartedly working out the constructive programme. Without it the whole nation cannot rise from its age-long torpor. Whether the British remain or not, it is our duty always to wipe out unemployment, to bridge the gulf between rich and poor, to banish communal strife, to exorcize the demon of untouchability, to reform dacoits and save the people from them. If crores of people do not take a living interest in this nation-building work, freedom must remain a dream and unattainable by either non-violence or violence. — *GC*, 354.

(D) The Question of Literacy

369. No doubt I regard illiteracy among my people as deplorable and I consider it necessary to educate them, but it is not at all impossible to imbibe the *satyagraha* principle in an absolutely illiterate man. This is my long-standing experience. — *YI*, Nov. 1919, *Tagore*, 37.

370. The ryots do not need to be literate to appreciate their rights and their duties. —*Nat*, 290.

371. Our love of the English language in preference to our own mother tongue has caused a deep chasm between the educated and the politically-minded classes and the masses. The languages of India have suffered impoverishment. We flounder when we make the vain attempt to express abstruse thought in the mother tongue. There are no equivalents for scientific terms. The result has been disastrous. The masses remain cut off from the modern mind. We are too near our own times correctly to measure the disservice caused to India by this neglect of its great languages. It is easy enough to understand that, unless we undo the mischief, the mass mind must remain imprisoned. The masses can make no solid contribution to the construction of Swaraj. It is inherent in Swaraj based on non-violence that every individual makes his own direct

contribution to the Independence movement. The masses cannot do this fully unless they understand every step with all its implications. This is impossible unless every step is explained in their own languages. —*CP*, 16.

(E) LABOUR ORGANIZATION

372. We must not tamper with the masses. It is dangerous to make political use of factory labourers or the peasantry —not that we are not entitled to do so, but we are not ready for it. We have neglected their political (as distinguished from literary) education all these long years. We have not got enough honest, intelligent, reliable, and brave workers to enable us to act upon these countrymen of ours. —*YI*, 9-2-21, 43.

373. Labour in India is still extremely unorganized. The labourers have no mind of their own when it comes to national policy or even the general welfare of labour itself. Labourers in various parts of India have no social contact and no other mutual ties. It is provincial and even in the same city it is highly communal. It is not everywhere wisely guided. In many places it is under selfish and highly unscrupulous guidance.

There is no absolute cohesion amongst provincial labour leaders, and there is little discipline among sub-leaders. The latter do not uniformly tender obedience to their provincial chiefs. Leaders in different provinces have no single policy to follow. In these circumstances an All India Union can only exist on paper.

If the Ahmedabad Labour Union can succeed in perfecting its own organization it is bound to serve as a model to the rest of India, and its success is bound to prove highly infectious.

But I am free to confess that there is as yet no assurance of success in the near future. The energy of the workers is sorely tried in combating disruptive forces that ever continue to crop up.

One word as to policy. It is not anti-capitalistic. The idea is to take from capital labour's due share and no more and this, not by paralyzing capital, but by reform among labourers from within and by their own self-

consciousness; not again through the cleverness and manoeuvring of non-labour leaders, but by educating labour to evolve its own leadership and its own self-reliant, self-existing organization. Its direct aim is not in the least degree political. Its direct aim is internal reform and evolution of internal strength. The indirect result of this evolution when, and if it ever becomes complete, will naturally be tremendously political.

I have not, therefore, the remotest idea of exploiting labour or organizing it for any direct political power of first-class importance when it becomes a self-existing unit. Labour, in my opinion, must not become a pawn in the hands of the politician on the political chessboard. It must, by its sheer strength, dominate the chessboard.

This is my dream. I hug it because it gives me all the consolation I need, and the policy I have outlined, you will recognize, is a direct outcome of my implicit belief in an acceptance of non-violence. It may be all a delusion but it is as much a reality with me as life itself so long as I do not see it as delusion, but see it as the only life-giving force. (Letter dated May 10th, 1927) —*Is India Different ?*, 25.

374. The Ahmedabad Labour Union has of late started a great experiment which is likely to prove of great interest and importance to all labour organizations. The essence of the experiment consists in training its members to a supplementary occupation in addition to their principal occupation in the mills so that in the event of a lock-out, strike or loss of employment otherwise, they would always have something to fall back upon instead of being faced with the prospect of starvation. A mill-hand's life is ever full of vicissitudes. Thrift and economy no doubt provide a sort of remedy and it would be criminal to neglect them. But the savings thus made cannot carry one far, seeing that the vast bulk of our mill labourers are always struggling on the margin of bare subsistence. Moreover it would never do for a working man during strike or unemployment to rest idly at home. There is nothing more injurious to his morale and self-respect than enforced idleness. The working class will never feel secure or develop a sense of self-assurance

and strength unless its members are armed with an unfailing subsidiary means of subsistence to serve as a second string to their bow in a crisis.

The idea of a subsidiary occupation for the mill-hands was first conceived by me during the eventful twenty-three days' strike of the Ahmedabad mill-hands in the year 1918. It occurred to me then that if the strike was to be successful the mill-hands must have an occupation that would maintain them wholly or partly. They must not rely upon doles. During the strike many of them were employed on unskilled labour. It was then that I mooted my suggestion to teach mill-hands a subsidiary occupation. But my suggestion remained a dead letter till the next strike came. A sort of a beginning was made then. But it was difficult to bring into being all of a sudden an effective organization for teaching subsidiary occupations. With the end of the second strike died also the effort to find and teach suitable occupations.

An organized and systematic effort is now being made by the Labour Union in that direction. Mill-hands are being taught to select occupations which they can practise in their leisure hours at home and which would give them substantial relief in times of unemployment. These are ginning, cleaning, carding and spinning of cotton, weaving, tailoring, soap and paper making, type-setting, etc.

I hold that a working knowledge of a variety of occupations is to the working class what metal is to the capitalist. A labourer's skill is his capital. Just as the capitalist cannot make his capital fructify without the co-operation of labour, even so the working man cannot make his labour fructify without the co-operation of capital. And if both labour and capital have the gift of intelligence equally developed in them and have confidence in their capacity to secure a fair deal, each at the hands of the other, they would get to respect and appreciate each other as equal partners in a common enterprise. They need not regard each other as inherently irreconcilable antagonists. But the difficulty is that whilst today capital is organized and seems to be securely entrenched, labour is not. The

intelligence of the working man is cramped by his soulless, mechanical occupation which leaves him little scope or chance to develop his mind. It has prevented him from realizing the power and full dignity of his status. He has been taught to believe that his wages have to be dictated by capitalists instead of his demanding his own terms. Let him only be organized along right lines and have his intelligence quickened, let him learn a variety of occupations, and he will be able to go about with his head erect and never be afraid of being without means of sustenance.

It is the grossest of superstitions for the working man to believe that he is helpless before the employers. The effort of the Labour Union in Ahmedabad is to dispel this superstition in a concrete manner. Its experiment, therefore, ought to be welcomed by all concerned. Success will depend on an inflexible determination on the part of the Labour Union to follow up the good beginning that has been made, with unflagging perseverance. It must have the right sort of instructors who can arouse among the workers an intelligent interest in their work. A handicraft plied merely mechanically can be as cramping to the mind and soul as any other pursuit taken up mechanically. An unintelligent effort is like a corpse from which the spirit has departed. —*H*, 3-7-37, 161.

General Instructions

375. Workers should definitely realize that the constructive programme is the non-violent and truthful way of winning 'Poorna Swaraj'. Its wholesale fulfilment is complete independence. Imagine all the forty crores of people engaged in the whole of the constructive programme which is designed to build up the nation from the very bottom upward!

Can anybody dispute the proposition that it must mean complete independence in every sense of the expression, including the ousting of foreign domination?

When the critics laugh at the proposition, what they mean is that forty crores of people will never co-operate in the effort to fulfil the programme. No doubt there is considerable truth in the scoff. My answer is, it is worth

the attempt. Given an indomitable will on the part of a band of earnest workers, the programme is as workable as any other and more so than most. Anyway, I have no substitute for it, if it is to be based on non-violence.

Civil disobedience, mass or individual, is an aid to constructive effort and is a full substitute for armed revolt. Just as military training is necessary for armed revolt, training in constructive effort is equally necessary for civil resistance. And just as the use of arms becomes necessary only when occasion demands it, even so is the use of civil resistance only occasional.

Therefore workers will never be on the look-out for civil resistance. They will hold themselves in readiness, if the constructive effort is sought to be defeated. To take one or two illustrations, effort for communal friendship cannot be defeated, political pacts can.

But political pacts are required because of the previous lack of friendship. Again Khadi manufacture and its use cannot be defeated if both become fairly universal. The manufacture and use are not to be brought about by being imposed upon the people, but they have to be intelligently accepted by them as one of the necessary items of the freedom movement, when it is worked from the villages as units. Pioneers even in such programmes can be obstructed. They have had to go through the fire of suffering throughout the world.

There is no Swaraj without suffering. In violence truth is the greatest sufferer: in non-violence truth is ever triumphant.

If this preliminary observation has gone home to the reader he will find the constructive programme to be full of deep interest. It should prove as absorbing as politics so-called and platform oratory.

The detailed constructive programme is to be found in my pamphlet on it, and Dr. Rajendra Prasad's which is a running commentary on it. It should be remembered that it is illustrative, not exhaustive. Local circumstances may suggest many more items not touched in the printed programme. These are beyond the scope of a treatise on

an All India programme. They are necessarily for local workers to find out and do the needful.

In these hints I have singled out some items for fuller emphasis in the light of experience gained since the publication of the programme.

The *kisan* or the peasant, whether as a landless labourer or a labouring proprietor, comes first. He is the salt of the earth which rightly belongs or should belong to him, not to the absentee landlord or zamindar. But in the non-violent way the labourer cannot forcibly eject the absentee landlord. He has so to work as to make it impossible for the landlord to exploit him. Closest co-operation amongst the peasants is absolutely necessary. To this end special organizing bodies or committees should be formed where there are none and those already in existence should be reformed where necessary. The *kisans* are for the most part illiterate. Both adults and young persons of school-going age should be educated. This applies to men and women. When they are landless labourers their wages should be brought to a level that would ensure a decent living which should mean balanced food, dwelling houses and clothing, which should satisfy health requirements.

Land laws should be investigated. The peasant indebtedness offers a limitless field for research. The problem of cattle too is an integral part of agriculture in India and therefore requires the attention of workers skilled in this very intricate and somewhat baffling problem.

Closely allied to the *kisan* work is 'labour'. Here labour means industrial labour and therefore concentrated and centralized and much more limited in scope. Moreover, it lends itself readily to political handling.

Being necessarily confined to cities it attracts workers more easily than *kisan* work. As part of constructive programme its primary aim is elevation of labour to its deserved status. Therefore a labour worker's aim should be to raise the moral and intellectual height of labour and thus by sheer merit to make him or her capable not merely of bettering his or her material condition but making labour master of the means of production instead of being the

slave that it is. Capital should be labour's servant, not its master. Labour should be made conscious of its duty from whose performance rights follow as a matter of course. In a concrete form:

(a) Labour should have its own unions.

(b) Education both general and scientific, of both men and women, should be regularly undertaken through night schools.

(c) Children of labourers should be educated after the basic education style.

(d) There should be a hospital, a creche and a maternity home attached to every centre.

(e) Labour should be able to support itself during strikes. (Labour should be taught the science of conducting a successful non-violent strike.)

All the work I have mentioned could be done only through unions mentioned in (a). To my knowledge the Ahmedabad Union is the best managed union. This does not mean that it has reached my ideal. It is trying to. If all the unions worked in the same direction, the lot of labour would be infinitely better than it is today. Labour united and morally and intellectually trained would any day be superior to capital.

Next in importance is the 'student' class above the age of 12. Indeed if we had enough workers of the right type, I would go so far as to say that we should work among them as soon as they begin learning as infants. For they have to be taken in hand from the school-going age. I need not say that I have not in mind their political use. For the present the schools are largely under Government control or are influenced by them. Hence the students' education is defective in a vital matter. They are untouched by the political condition of the country save what they learn from the newspapers or platform orators. They should have, in a systematic manner, their present education supplemented by the Congress workers. How this can be fitted into the present system of education is a serious question. But it has to be tackled. Up to the Matriculation standard cooperation of parents is necessary. I adhere to the view often

expressed by me that the student world should be aloof from the political turmoil. It would be different if there was mass civil disobedience. But that is out of the question for the time being at any rate. But they should have education in national consciousness. It is the duty of an independent State to teach its citizens to be patriotic.

The education imparted is by a foreign agency. It runs contrary to the national aspirations.

There should, therefore, be a body of workers whose duty it would be to undertake the big task of taking in hand the work mentioned above. In this sense it is a new field and it is of vital importance to us. We must recognize the fact that the students are not to be weaned from schools and colleges. The rapidly increasing number of entrants is proof positive of it. The best course, therefore, is to supplement their studies in an orderly manner. Deliverance lies through national effort in this direction showing marked superiority over the foreign method. — *HS*, 28-10-44.

Regarding Workers

376. Real politics are not a game. The late Mr. Gokhale used to deplore that we had not gone beyond treating politics as a pastime. We have no notion as to how much the country has lost by reason of amateurs having managed its battles with the serious-minded, trained and whole-time working bureaucracy. A movement lacks sincerity when it is supported by unwilling workers under pressure. — *YI*, 11-8-20, *Tagore*, 409.

377. Unless the Congress can produce proud, defiant, self-respecting, sensitive, selfless and self-sacrificing patriots who would count no cost too great, there is, for this poor country of ours, for a long time to come, no Swaraj in which the poorest can participate. You and I may get a larger share in the spoils of exploitation, but I am sure you will refuse to call that Swaraj. — *YI*, 26-6-24, 210.

378. 'What are the civil resisters thus freed to do if *they are to be ready for the call whenever it comes?'* They must learn the art and the beauty of self-denial and voluntary poverty. They must engage themselves in nation-building

activities, the spread of Khaddar through personal hand-spinning and hand-weaving, the spread of communal unity of hearts by irreproachable personal conduct towards one another in every walk of life, the banishing of untouchability in every shape or form in one's own person, the spread of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks and drugs by personal contact with individual addicts, and generally by cultivating personal purity. These are services which provide maintenance on the poor man's scale. Those for whom the poor man's scale is not feasible should find a place in small unorganized industries of national importance which give a better wage.

Let it be understood that civil resistance is for those who know and perform the duty of voluntary obedience to law and authority. — *ABP*, 8-4-34.

379. Q. Don't you think that only those who work without any remuneration or allowance can inspire confidence in them, i. e. those who accept nothing from any association or from the village ?

A. No. They do not even know who is and who is not working for remuneration. What does impress them is the way in which we live, our habits, our talks, even our gestures. There may be a few who suspect us of a desire to earn ; we have to dispel their suspicion no doubt. And then do not run away with the feeling that he who accepts nothing from an association or from the village is by any means an ideal servant. He is often prey to self-righteousness which debases one. — *H*, 25-7-36, 187.

XI

NON-VIOLENCE

380. The world is weary of hate. We see the fatigue overcoming the Western nations. We see that this song of hate has not benefited humanity. Let it be the privilege of India to turn a new leaf and set a lesson to the world. — *IV*, 166.

My Task

381. In the past, non-co-operation has been deliberately expressed in violence to the evil-doer. I am endeavouring to show to my countrymen that violent non-co-operation only multiplies evil and that as evil can only be sustained by violence, withdrawal of support of evil requires complete abstention from violence. Non-violence implies voluntary submission to the penalty for non-co-operation with evil. — *YI*, 23-3-22, 168.

382. I am not a visionary. I claim to be a practical idealist. The religion of non-violence is not meant merely for the *rishis* and saints. It is meant for the common people as well. Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law — to the strength of the spirit.

I have therefore ventured to place before India the ancient law of self-sacrifice. For, *satyagraha* and its off-shoots, non-co-operation and civil resistance, are nothing but new names for the law of suffering. The *rishis*, who discovered the law of non-violence in the midst of violence, were greater geniuses than Newton. They were themselves greater warriors than Wellington. Having themselves known the use of arms, they realized their uselessness and taught a weary world that its salvation lay not through violence but through non-violence. — *YI*, 11-8-20, *Tagore*, 712.

Non-violence as a World-force

383. You might of course say that there can be no non-violent rebellion and there has been none known to

history. Well, it is my ambition to provide an instance, and it is my dream that my country may win its freedom through non-violence. And, I would like to repeat to the world times without number, that I will not purchase my country's freedom at the cost of non-violence. My marriage to non-violence is such an absolute thing that I would rather commit suicide than be deflected from my position. I have not mentioned truth in this connection, simply because truth cannot be expressed excepting by non-violence. —*YI*, 12-11-31, 354.

384. Science of war leads one to dictatorship pure and simple. Science of non-violence alone can lead one to pure democracy. England, France and America have to make their choice. That is the challenge of the two dictators.

Russia is out of the picture just now. Russia has a dictator who dreams of peace and thinks he will wade to it through a sea of blood. No one can say what Russian dictatorship will mean to the world. —*H*, 15-10-38, 290.

385. True democracy or the Swaraj of the masses can never come through untruthful and violent means, for the simple reason that the natural corollary to their use would be to remove all opposition through the suppression or extermination of the antagonists. That does not make for individual freedom. Individual freedom can have the fullest play only under a regime of unadulterated *ahimsa*. —*H*, 27-5-39, 143.

War vs. Non-violence

386. A believer in non-violence is pledged not to resort to violence or physical force either directly or indirectly in defence of anything, but he is not precluded from helping men or institutions that are themselves not based on non-violence. If the reverse were the case, I would, for instance, be precluded from helping India to attain Swaraj because the future Parliament of India under Swaraj, I know for certain, will be having some military and police forces, or to take a domestic illustration, I may not help a son to secure justice, because forsooth he is not a believer in non-violence.

Mr. Zacharias' proposition will reduce all commerce by a believer in non-violence to an impossibility. And there

are not wanting men, who do believe that complete non-violence means complete cessation of all activity.

Not such, however, is my doctrine of non-violence. My business is to refrain from doing any violence myself, and to induce by persuasion and service as many of God's creatures as I can to join me in the belief and practice. But I would be untrue to my faith, if I refused to assist in a just cause any men or measures that did not entirely coincide with the principle of non-violence. I would be promoting violence, if finding the Mussalmans to be in the right, I did not assist them by means strictly non-violent against those who had treacherously plotted the destruction of the dignity of Islam. Even when both parties believe in violence, there is often such a thing as justice on one side or the other. A robbed man has justice on his side, even though he may be preparing to regain the lost property by force. And it would be accounted as a triumph of non-violence, if the injured party could be persuaded to regain his property by methods of *satyagraha*, i. e. love or soul-force rather than a free fight. — *YI*, 1-6-21, 173.

387. My resistance to war does not carry me to the point of thwarting those who wish to take part in it. I reason with them. I put before them the better way and leave them to make the choice. — *H*, 18-1-42, 4.

388. I accept broad facts of history and draw my own lessons for my conduct. I do not want to repeat it in so far as the broad facts contradict the highest laws of life. But I positively refuse to judge man from the scanty material furnished to us by history. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum.* Kamal Pasha and De Valera too I cannot judge. But for me as a believer in non-violence out and out they cannot be my guides in life in so far as their faith in war is concerned. I believe in Krishna perhaps more than the writer. But my Krishna is the Lord of the Universe, the creator, preserver and destroyer of us all. He may destroy because He creates. But I must not be drawn into a philosophical or religious argument with my friends. I have not the qualifications for teaching my philosophy of life. I have barely qualifications for practising the philosophy I believe.

I am but a poor struggling soul yearning to be wholly good — wholly truthful and wholly non-violent in thought, word and deed, but ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be true. I admit, and assure my revolutionary friends, that it is a painful climb, but the pain of it is a positive pleasure for me. Each step upward makes me feel stronger and fit for the next. But all that pain and pleasure are for me. The revolutionaries are at liberty to reject the whole of my philosophy. To them I merely present my own experiences as a co-worker in the same cause even as I have successfully presented them to the Ali Brothers and many other friends. They can and do applaud whole-heartedly the action of Mustafa Kamal Pasha and possibly De Valera and Lenin. But they realize with me that India is not like Turkey or Ireland or Russia and that revolutionary activity is suicidal at this stage of the country's life at any rate if not for all time, in a country so vast, so hopelessly divided and with the masses so deeply sunk in pauperism and so fearfully terror-struck. — *H*, 12-7-42, 219.

389. I would say to my critics to enter with me into the sufferings, not only of the people of India but of those, whether engaged in the war or not, of the whole world. I cannot look at this butchery going on in the world with indifference. I have an unchangeable faith that it is beneath the dignity of men to resort to mutual slaughter. I have no doubt that there is a way out. — *HS*, 20-7-44.

390. The accumulated experience of the past thirty years, the first eight of which were in South Africa, fills me with the greatest hope that in the adoption of non-violence lies the future of India and the world. It is the most harmless and yet equally effective way of dealing with the political and economic wrongs of the down-trodden portion of humanity. I have known from early youth that non-violence is not a cloistered virtue to be practised by the individual for the peace and final salvation, but it is a rule of conduct for society if it is to live consistently with human dignity and make progress towards the attainment of peace for which it has been yearning for ages past. — *GC*, 170.

Moral Equivalent of War

391. Up to the year 1906, I simply relied on appeal to reason. I was a very industrious reformer. I was a good draftsman, as I always had a close grip of facts which in its turn was the necessary result of my meticulous regard for truth. But I found that reason failed to produce an impression when the critical moment arrived in South Africa. My people were excited; even a worm will and does sometimes turn — and there was talk of wreaking vengeance. I had then to choose between allying myself to violence or finding out some other method of meeting the crisis and stopping the rot and it came to me that we should refuse to obey legislation that was degrading and let them put us in jail if they liked. Thus came into being the moral equivalent of war. I was then a loyalist, because, I implicitly believed that the sum total of the activities of the British Empire was good for India and for humanity. Arriving in England soon after the outbreak of the war I plunged into it and later when I was forced to go to India as a result of the pleurisy that I had developed, I led a recruiting campaign at the risk of my life, and to the horror of some of my friends. The disillusionment came in 1919 after the passage of the Black Rowlatt Act and the refusal of the Government to give the simple elementary redress of proved wrongs that we had asked for. And so, in 1920, I became a rebel. Since then the conviction has been growing upon me, that things of fundamental importance to the people are not secured by reason alone but have to be purchased with their suffering. Suffering is the law of human beings; war is the law of the jungle. But suffering is infinitely more powerful than the law of the jungle for converting the opponent and opening his ears, which are otherwise shut, to the voice of reason. Nobody has probably drawn up more petitions or espoused more forlorn causes than I and I have come to this fundamental conclusion that if you want something really important to be done you must not merely satisfy the reason, you must move the heart also. The appeal of reason is more to the head but the penetration of the

heart comes from suffering. It opens up the inner understanding in man. Suffering is the badge of the human race, not the sword. — *YI*, 5-11-31, 341.

The Essence of Non-violence

392. (1) Non-violence is the law of the human race and is infinitely greater than and superior to brute force.

(2) In the last resort it does not avail to those who do not possess a living faith in the God of Love.

(3) Non-violence affords the fullest protection to one's self-respect and sense of honour, but not always to possession of land or movable property, though its habitual practice does prove a better bulwark than the possession of armed men to defend them. Non-violence in the very nature of things is of no assistance in the defence of ill-gotten gains and immoral acts.

(4) Individuals and nations who would practise non-violence must be prepared to sacrifice (nations to the last man) their all except honour. It is therefore inconsistent with the possession of other people's countries, i. e. modern imperialism which is frankly based on force for its defence.

(5) Non-violence is a power which can be wielded equally by all — children, young men and women or grown up people, provided they have a living faith in the God of Love and have therefore equal love for all mankind. When non-violence is accepted as the law of life it must pervade the whole being and not be applied to isolated acts.

(6) It is a profound error to suppose that whilst the law is good enough for individuals it is not for masses of mankind. — *H*, 5-9-36, 236.

Is Perfection Possible?

393. Perfect non-violence is impossible so long as we exist physically, for we would want some space at least to occupy. Perfect non-violence whilst you are inhabiting the body is only a theory like Euclid's point or straight line, but we have to endeavour every moment of our lives. — *H*, 21-7-40, 211.

Ahimsa, distinguished from Non-killing

394. Let us now examine the root of *ahimsa*. It is uttermost selflessness. Selflessness means complete freedom from a regard for one's body. If man desired to realize himself i. e. Truth, he could do so only by being completely detached from the body i. e. by making all other beings feel safe from him. That is the way of *ahimsa*.

Ahimsa does not simply mean non-killing. *Himsa* means causing pain to or killing any life out of anger, or from a selfish purpose, or with the intention of injuring it. Refraining from so doing is *ahimsa*. — *YI*, 4-11-26, 385.

395. Violence will be violence for all time, and all violence is sinful. But what is inevitable, is not *regarded* as a sin, so much so that the science of daily practice has not only declared the inevitable violence involved in killing for sacrifice as permissible but even regarded it as meritorious.

It is no easy thing to walk on the sharp sword-edge of *ahimsa* in this world which is full of *himsa*. Wealth does not help; anger is the enemy of *ahimsa*; and pride is a monster that swallows it up. In this strait and narrow observance of this religion of *ahimsa* one has often to know so-called *himsa* as the truest form of *ahimsa*. — *YI*, 21-10-26, 363.

396. The sin of *himsa* consists not in merely taking life, but in taking life for the sake of one's perishable body. All destruction therefore involved in the process of eating, drinking etc. is selfish and therefore *himsa*. But man regards it to be unavoidable and puts up with it. But the destruction of bodies of tortured creatures being for their own peace cannot be regarded as *himsa*, or the unavoidable destruction caused for the purpose of protecting one's wards cannot be regarded as *himsa*.

1. It is impossible to sustain one's body without the destruction of other bodies to some extent.

2. All have to destroy some life,

(a) for sustaining their own bodies,

(b) for protecting those under their care, or

(c) sometimes for the sake of those whose life is taken.

3. (a) and (b) in '2' mean *himsa* to a greater or less extent. (c) means no *himsa* and is therefore *ahimsa*. *Himsa* in (a) and (b) is unavoidable.

4. A progressive *ahimsa-ist* will, therefore, commit the *himsa* contained in (a) and (b) as little as possible, only when it is unavoidable, and after full and mature deliberation and having exhausted all remedies to avoid it.

Taking life may be a duty. We do destroy as much life as we think necessary for sustaining our body. Thus for food we take life, vegetable and other, and for health we destroy mosquitoes and the like by the use of disinfectants etc. and we do not think that we are guilty of irreligion in doing so . . . for the benefit of the species, we kill carnivorous beasts . . . Even man-slaughter may be necessary in certain cases. Suppose a man runs amuck and goes furiously about sword in hand, and killing anyone that comes in his way, and no one dares to capture him alive. Anyone who despatches this lunatic, will earn the gratitude of the community and be regarded as a benevolent man. — *YI*, 4-11-26, 385.

397. I see that there is an instinctive horror of killing living beings under any circumstances whatever. For instance, an alternative has been suggested in the shape of confining even rabid dogs in a certain place and allowing them to die a slow death. Now my idea of compassion makes this thing impossible for me. I cannot for a moment bear to see a dog, or for that matter any other living being, helplessly suffering the torture of a slow death. I do not kill a human being thus circumstanced because I have more hopeful remedies. I should kill a dog similarly situated, because in its case I am without a remedy. Should my child be attacked with rabies and there was no helpful remedy to relieve his agony, I should consider it my duty to take his life. Fatalism has its limits. We leave things to Fate after exhausting all the remedies. One of the remedies and the final one to relieve the agony of a tortured child is to take his life. — *YI*, 18-11-26, 395.

Why then not Kill Those Who Oppress Mankind?

398. No human being is so bad as to be beyond redemption, no human being is so perfect as to warrant his destroying him whom he wrongly considers to be wholly evil. — *YI*, 26-3-31, 49.

399. A *satyagrahi* must never forget the distinction between evil and the evil-doer. He must not harbour ill-will or bitterness against the latter. He may not even employ needlessly offensive language against the evil person, however unrelieved his evil might be. For it is an article of faith with every *satyagrahi* that there is no one so fallen in this world but can be converted by love. A *satyagrahi* will always try to overcome evil by good, anger by love, untruth by truth, *himsa* by *ahimsa*. There is no other way of purging the world of evil. — *YI*, 8-8-29, 263.

Absence of Hatred

400. I hold myself to be incapable of hating any being on earth. By a long course of prayerful discipline, I have ceased for over forty years to hate anybody. I know this is a big claim. Nevertheless, I make it in all humility. But I can and do hate evil wherever it exists. I hate the system of government that the British people have set up in India. I hate the ruthless exploitation of India even as I hate from the bottom of my heart the hideous system of untouchability for which millions of Hindus have made themselves responsible. But I do not hate the domineering Englishmen as I refuse to hate the domineering Hindus. I seek to reform them in all the loving ways that are open to me. My non-co-operation has its roots not in hatred, but in love. My personal religion peremptorily forbids me to hate anybody. — *YI*, 6-8-25, 272.

401. We can only win over the opponent by love, never by hate. Hate is the subtlest form of violence. We cannot be really non-violent and yet have hate in us. — *H*, 17-8-34, 212.

Truth in Speech and Non-violence

402. To say or write a distasteful word is surely not violent especially when the speaker or writer believes it to

be true. The essence of violence is that there must be a violent intention behind a thought, word, or act, i. e. an intention to do harm to the opponent so-called.

False notions of propriety or fear of wounding susceptibilities often deter people from saying what they mean and ultimately land them on the shores of hypocrisy. But if non-violence of thought is to be evolved in individuals or societies or nations, truth has to be told, however harsh or unpopular it may appear to be for the moment. —*H*, 19-12-36, 362.

Satyam bruyat, Priyam bruyat na bruyat Satyamapriyam

403. In my opinion the Sanskrit text means that one should speak the truth in gentle language. One had better not speak it, if one cannot do so in a gentle way; meaning thereby that there is no truth in a man who cannot control his tongue. —*YI*, 17-9-25, 318.

Positive Aspects of Ahimsa: Love and Patience

404. In its positive form, *ahimsa* means the largest love, greatest charity. If I am a follower of *ahimsa*, I *must love* my enemy. I must apply the same rules to the wrong-doer who is my enemy or a stranger to me, as I would to my wrong-doing father or son. This active *ahimsa* necessarily includes truth and fearlessness. As man cannot deceive the loved one, he does not fear or frighten him or her. Gift of life is the greatest of all gifts; a man who gives it in reality, disarms all hostility. He has paved the way for an honourable understanding. And none who is himself subject to fear can bestow that gift. He must therefore be himself fearless. A man cannot practise *ahimsa* and be a coward at the same time. The practice of *ahimsa* calls forth the greatest courage. —*Nat*, 346.

405. Having flung aside the sword, there is nothing except the cup of love which I can offer to those who oppose me. It is by offering that cup that I expect to draw them close to me. I cannot think of permanent enmity between man and man, and believing as *I do in the theory* of rebirth, I live in the hope that *if* not *in this birth, in*

some other birth, I shall be able to hug all humanity in friendly embrace. — *YI*, 2-4-31, 54.

406. Love is the strongest force the world possesses and yet it is the humblest imaginable. — *YI*, 6-8-25, 272.

407. The hardest heart and the grossest ignorance must disappear before the rising sun of suffering without anger and without malice. — *YI*, 19-2-25, 61.

Non-violent Resistance

408. My goal is friendship with the whole world and I can combine the greatest love with the greatest opposition to wrong. — *YI*, 10-3-20, *Tagore*, 139.

409. Non-violence is 'not a resignation from all real fighting against wickedness.' On the contrary, the non-violence of my conception is a more active and real fight against wickedness than retaliation whose very nature is to increase wickedness. I contemplate a mental and therefore a moral opposition to immoralities. I seek entirely to blunt the edge of the tyrant s sword, not by putting up against it a sharper-edged weapon, but by disappointing his expectation that I would be offering physical resistance. The resistance of the soul that I should offer would elude him. It would at first dazzle him and at last compel recognition from him, which recognition would not humiliate him but would uplift him. It may be urged that this is an ideal state. And so it is. — *YI*, 8-10-25, 346.

Non-violence, Militant in Character

410. Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire to save his honour, his religion, his soul and lay the foundation for that empire's fall or its regeneration. — *YI*, 11-8-20, *Tagore*, 713.

411. Yours should not merely be a passive spirituality that spends itself in idle meditation, but it should be an active thing which will carry war into the enemy's camp. —

412. Never has anything been done on this earth without direct action. I reject the word 'passive resistance', because of its insufficiency and its being interpreted as a weapon of the weak.

What was the larger 'symbiosis' that Buddha and Christ preached ? Gentleness and love. Buddha fearlessly carried the war into the enemy's camp and brought down on its knees an arrogant priesthood. Christ drove out the money-changers from the temple of Jerusalem and drew down curses from heaven upon the hypocrites and the Pharisees. Both were for intensely direct action. But even as Buddha and Christ chastized, they showed unmistakable love and gentleness behind every act of theirs. —*YI*, 12-5-20, *Tagore*, 1072 and 1070.

413. Our aim is not merely to arouse the best in the Englishman but to do so whilst we are prosecuting our cause. If we cease to pursue our course, we do not evoke the best in him. The best must not be confounded with good temper. When we are dealing with any evil, we may have to ruffle the evil-doer. We have to run the risk, if we are to bring the best out of him. I have likened non-violence to aseptic and violence to antiseptic treatment. Both are intended to ward off the evil, and therefore cause a kind of disturbance which is often inevitable. The first never harms the evil-doer. — *H*, 30-3-40, 72.

Non-violence, the Virtue of the Strong

414. Non-violence presupposes ability to strike. It is a conscious, deliberate restraint put upon one's desire for vengeance. But vengeance is any day superior to passive, effeminate and helpless submission. Forgiveness is higher still. Vengeance too is weakness. The desire for vengeance comes out of fear of harm, imaginary or real. A man who fears no one on earth would consider it troublesome even to summon up anger against one who is vainly trying to injure him. — *YI*, 12-8-26, 285.

415. *Ahimsa* is the extreme limit of forgiveness. But forgiveness is the quality of the brave. *Ahimsa* is impossible without fearlessness. — *YI*, 4-11-26, 384.

416. My creed of non-violence is an extremely active force. It has no room for cowardice or even weakness. There is hope for a violent man to be some day non-violent, but there is none for a coward. I have therefore said more than once in these pages that if we do not know how to defend ourselves, our women and our places of worship by the force of suffering, i. e. non-violence, we must, if we are men, be at least able to defend all these by fighting. —*YI*, 16-6-27, 196.

417. There are two ways of defence. The best and the most effective is not to defend at all, but to remain at one's post risking every danger. The next best but equally honourable method is to strike bravely in self-defence and put one's life in the most dangerous positions. —*YI*, 18-12-24, 414.

418. Non-violence and cowardice go ill together. I can imagine a fully armed man to be at heart a coward. Possession of arms implies an element of fear, if not cowardice. But true non-violence is an impossibility without the possession of unadulterated fearlessness. —*H*, 15-7-39, 201.

True and False Non-violence

419. Non-violence to be a potent force must begin with the mind. Non-violence of the mere body without the co-operation of the mind is non-violence of the weak or the cowardly, and has therefore no potency. If we bear malice and hatred in our bosoms and pretend not to retaliate, it must recoil upon us and lead to our destruction. For abstention from mere bodily violence not to be injurious, it is at least necessary not to entertain hatred if we cannot generate active love.

All the songs and speeches betokening hatred must be taboo. —*YI*, 2-4-31, 58.

420. If we are unmanly today, we are so, not because we do not know how to strike, but because we fear to die. He is no follower of Mahavira, the apostle of Jainism, or of Buddha or of the *Vedas* who, being afraid to die, takes flight before any danger, real or imaginary, all the while

wishing that somebody else would remove the danger by destroying the person causing it. He is no follower of *ahimsa* who does not care a straw if he kills a man by inches by deceiving him in trade, or who would protect by force of arms a few cows and make away with the butcher or who, in order to do a supposed good to his country, does not mind killing off a few officials. All these are actuated by hatred, cowardice and fear. Here the love of the cow or the country is a vague thing intended to satisfy one's vanity or soothe a stinging conscience.

Ahimsa, truly understood, is in my humble opinion a panacea for all evils mundane and extra-mundane. We can never overdo it. Just at present we are not doing it at all. *Ahimsa* does not displace the practice of other virtues, but renders their practice imperatively necessary before it can be practised even in its rudiments. Mahavira and Buddha were soldiers, and so was Tolstoy. Only, they saw deeper and truer into their profession and found the secret of a true, happy, honourable and godly life. Let us be joint sharers with these teachers, and this land of ours will once more be the abode of gods. —*Nat,* 348.

Violence, rather than Cowardice

421. I do believe that, where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence. I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should, in a cowardly manner, become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour.

But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment. Forgiveness adorns the soldier. But abstinence is forgiveness only when there is the power to punish; it is meaningless when it pretends to proceed from a helpless creature. But I do not believe India to be helpless. I do not believe myself to be a helpless creature. Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will. — *YI,* 11-8-20, *Tagore,* 711.

422. The people of a village near Bettia told me that they had run away whilst the police were looting their

houses and molesting their womenfolk. When they said that they had run away because I had told them to be non-violent, I hung my head in shame. I assured them that such was not the meaning of my non-violence. I expected them to intercept the mightiest power that might be in the act of harming those who were under their protection, and draw without retaliation all harm upon their own heads even to the point of death, but never to run away from the storm centre. It was manly enough to defend one's property, honour, or religion at the point of the sword. It was manlier and nobler to defend them without seeking to injure the wrong-doer. But it was unmanly, unnatural and dishonourable to forsake the post of duty and, in order to save one's skin, to leave property, honour or religion to the mercy of the wrong-doer. I could see my way of delivering the message of *ahimsa* to those who knew how to die, not to those who were afraid of death.—*IV*, 254.

423. The weakest of us physically must be taught the art of facing dangers and giving a good account of ourselves. I want both the Hindus and the Mussalmans to cultivate the cool courage, to die without killing. But if one has not that courage, I want him to cultivate the art of killing and being killed, rather than in a cowardly manner flee from danger. For the latter in spite of his flight does commit mental *himsa*. He flees because he has not the courage to be killed in the act of killing. — *YI*, 20-10-21, 335.

424. Self-defence is the only honourable course where there is unreadiness for self-immolation. — *H*, 20-7-35, 181.

425. I would risk violence a thousand times than the emasculation of a whole race.—*YI*, 4-8-20, *Tagore*, 321.

426. The Hindus think that they are physically weaker than the Mussalmans. The latter consider themselves weak in educational and earthly equipment. They are now doing what all weak bodies have done hitherto. This fighting, therefore, however unfortunate it may be, is a sign of growth. It is like the Wars of the Roses. Out of it will rise a mighty nation. — *YI*, 9-9-26, 316.

Limitations of Violence

427. Hitherto I have given historical instances of bloodless non-co-operation. I will not insult the intelligence of the reader by citing historical instances of non-co-operation combined with violence, but I am free to confess that there are on record as many successes as failures in violent non-co-operation. — *YI*, 4-8-20, *Tagore*, 320.

428. Revolutionary crime is intended to exert pressure. But it is the insane pressure of anger and ill-will. I contend that non-violent acts exert pressure far more effective than violent acts, for that pressure comes from goodwill and gentleness.—*YI*, 26-12-24, 420.

429. I do not blame the British. If we were weak in numbers as they are, we too would perhaps have resorted to the same methods as they are now employing. Terrorism and deception are weapons not of the strong but of the weak. The British are weak in numbers, we are weak in spite of our numbers. The result is that each is dragging the other down. It is common experience that Englishmen lose in character after residence in India and that Indians lose in courage and manliness by contact with Englishmen. This process of weakening is good neither for us two nations, nor for the world.—*YI*, 22-9-20, *Tagore*, 1092.

430. I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent. I do not believe that the killing of even every Englishman can do the slightest good to India. The millions will be just as badly off as they are today, if someone made it possible to kill off every Englishman tomorrow. The responsibility is more ours than that of the English for the present state of things. The English will be powerless to do evil if we will but be good. Hence my incessant emphasis on reform from within.—*YI*, 21-5-25, 178.

431. History teaches one that those who have, no doubt with honest motives, ousted the greedy by using brute force against them, have in their turn become a prey to the disease of the conquered.—*YI*, 6-5-26, 164.

His Appeal to every Japanese

432. The end and aim of the movement for British withdrawal is to prepare India, by making her free for resisting all militarist and imperialist ambition, whether it is called British Imperialism, German Nazism, or your pattern. If we do not, we shall have been ignoble spectators of the militarization of the world in spite of our belief that in non-violence we have the only solvent of the militarist spirit and ambition. Personally I fear that without declaring the Independence of India the Allied Powers will not be able to beat the Axis combination which has raised violence to the dignity of a religion. The Allies cannot beat you and your partners unless they beat you in your ruthless and skilled warfare. If they copy it, their declaration that they will save the world for democracy and individual freedom must come to naught. I feel that they can only gain strength to avoid copying your ruthlessness by declaring and recognizing *now* the freedom of India, and turning sullen India's forced co-operation into freed India's voluntary co-operation.

To Britain and the Allies we have appealed in the name of justice, in proof of their professions, and in their own self-interest. To you I appeal in the name of humanity. It is a marvel to me that you do not see that ruthless warfare is nobody's monopoly. If not the Allies, some other Power will certainly improve upon your method and beat you with your own weapon. Even if you win you will leave no legacy to your people of which they would feel proud. They cannot take pride in a recital of cruel deeds however skilfully achieved.

Even if you win, it will not prove that you were in the right; it will only prove that your power of destruction was greater. This applies obviously to the Allies too, unless they perform *now* the just and righteous act of freeing India as an earnest and promise of similarly freeing all other subject peoples in Asia and Africa.

Our appeal to Britain is coupled with the offer of free India's willingness to let the Allies retain their troops in India. The offer is made in order to prove that we do not in any way mean to harm the Allied cause, and in order

to prevent you from being misled into feeling that you have but to step into the country that Britain has vacated. Needless to repeat that if you cherish any such idea and will carry it out, we will not fail in resisting you with all the might that our country can muster. I address this appeal to you in the hope that our movement may even influence you and your partners in the right direction and deflect you and them from the course which is bound to end in your moral ruin and the reduction of human beings to robots.

The hope of your response to my appeal is much fainter than that of response from Britain. I know that the British are not devoid of a sense of justice and they know me. I do not know you enough to be able to judge. All I have read tells me that you listen to no appeal but to the sword. How I wish that you are cruelly misrepresented and that I shall touch the right chord in your heart! Anyway I have an undying faith in the responsiveness of human nature. On the strength of that faith I have conceived the impending movement in India, and it is that faith which has prompted this appeal to you. —*H*, 26-7-42, 240.

To the Revolutionary

433. Those whom you seek to depose are better armed and infinitely better organized than you are. You may not care for your own lives, but you dare not disregard those of your countrymen who have no desire to die a martyr's death. —*YI*, 26-12-24, 428.

434. From violence done to the foreign ruler, violence to our own people whom we may consider to be obstructing the country's progress is an easy natural step. Whatever may have been the result of violent activities in other countries and without reference to the philosophy of non-violence, it does not require much intellectual effort to see that if we resort to violence for ridding society of the many abuses which impede our progress, we shall add to our difficulties and postpone the day of freedom. The people unprepared for reform because unconvinced of their necessity will be maddened with rage over their coercion, and will seek the

assistance of the foreigner in order to retaliate. Has not this been happening before our eyes for the past many years of which we have still painfully vivid recollections? — *YI*, 2-1-30, 4.

435. I hold that the world is sick of armed rebellions. I hold too that whatever may be true of other countries, a bloody revolution will not succeed in India. The masses will not respond. A movement in which masses have no active part can do no good to them. A successful bloody revolution can only mean further misery for the masses. For it would be still foreign rule for them. The non-violence I teach is active non-violence of the strongest. But the weakest can partake in it without becoming weaker. They can only be the stronger for having been in it. The masses are far bolder today than they ever were. A non-violent struggle necessarily involves construction on a mass scale. It cannot therefore lead to *tamas* or darkness or inertia. It means a quickening of the national life. That movement is still going on silently almost imperceptibly, but none the less surely.

I do not deny the revolutionary's heroism and sacrifice. But heroism and sacrifice in a bad cause are so much waste of splendid energy and hurt the good cause by drawing away attention from it by the glamour of the misused heroism and sacrifice in a bad cause.

I am not ashamed to stand erect before the heroic and self-sacrificing revolutionary because I am able to pit an equal measure of non-violent men's heroism and sacrifice untarnished by the blood of the innocent. Self-sacrifice of one innocent man is a million times more potent than the sacrifice of million men who die in the act of killing others. The willing sacrifice of the innocent is the most powerful retort to insolent tyranny that has yet been conceived by God or man. — *YI*, 12-2-25, 60.

Non-violence, the Swifter Way

436. The spiritual weapon of self-purification, intangible as it seems, is the most potent means of revolutionizing one's environment and loosening external shackles. It works

subtly and invisibly; it is an intense process though it might often seem a weary and long-drawn process, it is the straightest way to liberation, the surest and quickest and no effort can be too great for it. What it requires is faith — an unshakable mountain-like faith that flinches from nothing.

437. You need not be afraid that the method of non-violence is a slow long-drawn out process. It is the swiftest the world has seen, for it is the surest. — *YI*, 30-4-25, 153.

438. India's freedom is assured if she has patience. That way will be found to be the shortest even though it may appear to be the longest to our impatient nature. The way of peace insures internal growth and stability. — *YI*, 20-5-26, 184.

Non-violence also the Nobler Way

439. I am more concerned in preventing the brutalization of human nature than in the prevention of the sufferings of my own people. I know that people who voluntarily undergo a course of suffering raise themselves and the whole of humanity; but I also know that people who become brutalized in their desperate efforts to get victory over their opponents or to exploit weaker nations or weaker men, not only drag down themselves but mankind also. And it cannot be a matter of pleasure to me or anyone else to see human nature dragged to the mire. If we are all sons of the same God and partake of the same divine essence, we must partake of the sin of every person whether he belongs to us or to another race. You can understand how repugnant it must be to invoke the beast in any human being, how much more so in Englishmen, among whom I count numerous friends. I invite you all to give all the help that you can in the endeavour that I am making. — *YI*, 29-10-31, 325.

440. The doctrine of violence has reference only to the doing of injury by one to another. Suffering injury in one's own person is on the contrary of the essence of non-violence and is the chosen substitute for violence to others. It is not because I value life low that I can countenance with joy thousands voluntarily losing their lives for *satya-graha*, but because I know that it results in the long run

in the least loss of life and what is more, it ennobles those who lose their lives and morally enriches the world for their sacrifice.—*YI*, 8-10-25, 345.

441. The method of passive resistance is the clearest and safest, because, if the cause is not true, it is the resisters, and they alone, who suffer. —*Nat.*, 305.

442. Passive resistance is an all-sided sword; it can be used anyhow; it blesses him who uses it and him against whom it is used. —*IHR*, 48.

443. The beauty of *satyagraha*, of which non-co-operation is but a chapter, is that it is available to either side in a fight; that it has checks that automatically work for the vindication of truth and justice for that side, whichever it may be, that has truth and justice in preponderating measure. It is as powerful and faithful a weapon in the hand of the capitalist as in that of the labourer. It is as powerful in the hands of the government, as in that of the people, and will bring victory to the government, if people are misguided or unjust, as it will win the battle for the people if the government be in the wrong. Quick disorganization and defeat are bound to be the fate of bolstered up cases and artificial agitations, if the battle is fought with *satyagraha* weapons. Suppose the people are unfit to rule themselves, or are unwilling to sacrifice for a cause, then, no amount of noise will bring them victory in non-co-operation. — *YI*, 23-6-20, *Tagore* 42.

Criminal Assaults

444. The main thing, however, is for women to know how to be fearless. It is my firm conviction that a fearless woman who knows that her purity is her best shield can never be dishonoured. However beastly the man, he will bow in shame before the flame of her dazzling purity. There are examples even in modern times of women who have thus defended themselves. I can, as I write, recall two such instances. I therefore recommend women who read this article to try to cultivate this courage. They will become wholly fearless, if they can and cease to tremble as they do

today at the mere thought of assaults. It is not, however, necessary for a woman to go through a bitter experience for the sake of passing a test of courage. These experiences mercifully do not come in the way of lakhs or even thousands. Every soldier is not a beast. It is a minority that loses all sense of decency. Only twenty per cent of snakes are poisonous, and out of these a few only bite. They do not attack unless trodden on. But this knowledge does not help those who are full of fear and tremble at the sight of a snake. Parents and husbands should, therefore, instruct women in the art of becoming fearless. It can best be learnt from a living faith in God. Though He is invisible, He is one's unfailing protector. He who has this faith is the most fearless of all.

But such faith or courage cannot be acquired in a day. Meantime we must try to explore other means. When a woman is assaulted she may not stop to think in terms of *himsa* or *ahimsa*. Her primary duty is self-protection. She is at liberty to employ every method or means that come to her mind in order to defend her honour. God has given her nails and teeth. She must use them with all her strength and, if need be, die in the effort. The man or woman who has shed all fear of death will be able not only to protect himself or herself but others also through laying down his life. In truth we fear death most, and hence we ultimately submit to superior physical force. Some will bend the knee to the invader, some will resort to bribery, some will crawl on their bellies or submit to other forms of humiliation, and some women will even give their bodies rather than die. I have not written this in a carping spirit. I am only illustrating human nature. Whether we crawl on our bellies or whether a woman yields to the lust of man it is symbolic of that same love of life which makes us stoop to anything. Therefore only he who loses his life shall save it; नेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथाः । (*tena tyaktena bhunjithah*). Every reader should commit this matchless *shloka* to memory. But mere lip loyalty to it will be of no avail. It must penetrate deep down to the innermost recesses of his heart. To enjoy life one should give up the lure of life. That should be part of our nature.

So much for what a woman should do. But what about a man who is witness to such crimes? The answer is implied in the foregoing. He must not be a passive onlooker. He must protect the woman. He must not run for police help; he must not rest satisfied by pulling the alarm chain in the train. If he is able to practise non-violence, he will die in doing so and thus save the woman in jeopardy. If he does not believe in non-violence or cannot practise it, he must try to save her by using all the force he may have. In either way there must be readiness on his part to lay down his life. — *H*, 1-3-42, 60.

Non-violence during Riots

445. To quell riots non-violently, there must be true *ahimsa* in one's heart, an *ahimsa* that takes even the erring hooligan in its warm embrace. Such an attitude cannot be cultivated. It can only come as a result of prolonged and patient effort which must be made during peaceful times. The would-be members of a peace brigade should come into close touch and cultivate acquaintance with the so-called *goonda* element in his vicinity. He should know all and be known to all and win the hearts of all by his living and selfless service. No section should be regarded as too contemptible or mean to mix with. *Goondas* do not drop from the sky, nor do they spring from the earth like evil spirits. They are the product of social disorganization, and society is therefore responsible for their existence. In other words, they should be looked upon as a symptom of corruption in our body politic. To remove the disease we must first discover the underlying cause. To find the remedy will then be a comparatively easy task. — *H*, 15-9-40, 285.

Can Aggression be Stopped by Non-violence?

446. Q. How could a disarmed neutral country allow other nations to be destroyed? But for our army which was waiting ready at our frontier during the last war we should have been ruined.

A. At the risk of being considered a visionary or a fool I must answer this question in the only manner I know.

It would be cowardly of a neutral country to allow an army to devastate a neighbouring country. But there are two ways in common between soldiers of war and soldiers of non-violence, and if I had been a citizen of Switzerland and a President of the Federal State what I would have done would be to refuse passage to the invading army by refusing all supplies. Secondly, by re-enacting a Thermopylae in Switzerland, you would have presented a living wall of men and women and children and inviting the invaders to walk over your corpses. You may say that such a thing is beyond human experience and endurance. I say that it is not so. It was quite possible. Last year in Gujarat, women stood *lathi* charges unflinchingly and in Peshawar thousands stood hails of bullets without resorting to violence. Imagine these men and women staying in front of an army requiring a safe passage to another country. The army would be brutal enough to walk over them, you might say. I would then say you will still have done your duty by allowing yourselves to be annihilated. An army that dares to pass over the corpses of innocent men and women would not be able to repeat that experiment. You may, if you wish, refuse to believe in such courage on the part of the masses of men and women; but then you would have to admit that non-violence is made of sterner stuff. It was never conceived as a weapon of the weak, but of the stoutest hearts.

Q. Is it open to a soldier to fire in the air and avoid violence?

A. A soldier who having enlisted himself flattered himself that he was avoiding violence by shooting in the air did no credit to his courage or to his creed of non-violence. In my scheme of things, such a man would be held guilty of untruth and cowardice both — cowardice in that in order to escape punishment he enlisted, and untruth in that he enlisted to serve as soldier and did not fire as expected. Such a thing discredits the cause of waging war against war. The war-resisters have to be like Caesar's wife — above suspicion. Their strength lies in absolute adherence to the morality of the question. — *YI*, 31-12-31, 427.

447. Indeed the weakest State can render itself immune from attack if it learns the art of non-violence. But a small State, no matter how powerfully armed it is, cannot exist in the midst of a powerful combination of well-armed States. It has to be absorbed by or be under the protection of one of the members of such a combination. —*H*, 7-10-39, 293.

448. Whatever Hitler may ultimately prove to be, we know what Hitlerism has come to mean. It means naked, ruthless force reduced to an exact science and worked with scientific precision. In its effect it becomes almost irresistible.

Hitlerism will never be defeated by counter-Hitlerism. It can only breed superior Hitlerism raised to n^{th} degree. What is going on before our eyes is the demonstration of the futility of violence as also of Hitlerism.

What will Hitler do with his victory? Can he digest so much power? Personally he will go as empty-handed as his not very remote predecessor Alexander. For the Germans he will have left not the pleasure of owning a mighty empire but the burden of sustaining its crushing weight. For they will not be able to hold all the conquered nations in perpetual subjection. And I doubt if the Germans of future generations will entertain unadulterated pride in the deeds for which Hitlerism will be deemed responsible. They will honour Herr Hitler as a genius, as a brave man, a matchless organizer and much more. But I should hope that the Germans of the future will have learnt the art of discrimination even about their heroes. Anyway I think it will be allowed that all the blood that has been spilled by Hitler has added not a millionth part of an inch to the world's moral stature.

As against this imagine the state of Europe today if the Czechs, the Poles, the Norwegians, the French and the English had all said to Hitler: 'You need not make your scientific preparation for destruction. We will meet your violence with non-violence. You will therefore be able to destroy our non-violent army without tanks, battleships and airships.' It may be retorted that the only difference would be that Hitler would have got without fighting what he has gained after a bloody fight. Exactly. The history of Europe would then have been written differently. Possession

might (but only might) have been taken under non-violent resistance, as it has been taken now after perpetration of untold barbarities. Under non-violence, only those would have been killed who had trained themselves to be killed, if need be, but without killing anyone and without bearing malice towards anybody. I dare say that in that case Europe would have added several inches to its moral stature. And in the end I expect it is moral worth that will count. All else is dross. — *H*, 22-6-40, 172.

XII

DUTY IN THE MIDST OF WORLD WARS

His Attitude during the First World War

449. Q. Were you not helping the cause of war when you, both while in Africa and here, enlisted men for field service? How does it tally with your principle of *ahimsa*?

A. By enlisting men for ambulance work in South Africa and in England, and recruits for field service in India, I helped not the cause of war, but I helped the institution called the British Empire in whose ultimate beneficial character I then believed. My repugnance to war was as strong then as it is today; and I could not then have and would not have shouldered a rifle. But one's life is not a single straight line; it is a bundle of duties very often conflicting. And one is called upon continually to make one's choice between one duty and another. As a citizen not then, and not even now, a reformer leading an agitation against the institution of war, I had to advise and lead men who believed in war but who from cowardice or from base motives, or from anger against the British Government refrained from enlisting. I did not hesitate to advise them that so long as they believed in war and professed loyalty to the British constitution they were in duty bound to support it by enlistment. Though I do not believe in the use of arms, and though it is contrary to the religion of *ahimsa* which I profess, I should not hesitate to join an agitation for a repeal of the debasing Arms Act

which I have considered amongst the blackest crimes of the British Government against India. I do not believe in retaliation, but I did not hesitate to tell the villagers near Bettiah four years ago that they who knew nothing of *ahimsa* were guilty of cowardice in failing to defend the honour of their womenfolk and their property by force of arms. And I have not hesitated, as the correspondent should know, only recently to tell the Hindus that if they do not believe in out-and-out *ahimsa* and cannot practise it they will be guilty of a crime against their religion and humanity if they failed to defend by force of arms the honour of their women against any kidnapper who chooses to take away their women. And all this advice and my previous practice I hold to be not only consistent with my profession of the religion of *ahimsa* out-and-out, but a direct result of it. To state that noble doctrine is simple enough; to know it and to practise it in the midst of a world full of strife, turmoil and passions is a task whose difficulty I realize more and more day by day. And yet the conviction too that without it life is not worth living is growing daily deeper. — *YI*, 5-11-25, 379.

450. There is no defence for my conduct weighed only in the scales of *ahimsa*, I draw no distinction between those who wield the weapons of destruction and those who do red-cross work. Both participate in war and advance its cause. Both are guilty of the crime of war. But even after introspection during all these years, I feel that in the circumstances in which I found myself I was bound to adopt the course I did both during the Boer War and the Great European War and for that matter the so-called Zulu 'Rebellion' of Natal in 1906.

Life is governed by a multitude of forces. It would be smooth sailing, if one could determine the course of one's actions only by one general principle whose application at a given moment was too obvious to need even a moment's reflection. But I cannot recall a single act which could be so easily determined.

Being a confirmed war resister I have never given myself training in the use of destructive weapons in spite of

opportunities to take such training. It was perhaps thus that I escaped direct destruction of human life. But so long as I lived under a system of government based on force and voluntarily partook of the many facilities and privileges it created for me, I was bound to help that government to the extent of my ability when it was engaged in a war unless I non-co-operated with that government and renounced to the utmost of my capacity the privileges it offered me.

Let me take an illustration. I am a member of an institution which holds a few acres of land whose crops are in imminent peril from monkeys. I believe in the sacredness of all life and hence I regard it a breach of *ahimsa* to inflict any injury on the monkeys. But I do not hesitate to instigate and direct an attack on the monkeys in order to save the crops. I would like to avoid this evil. I can avoid it by leaving or breaking up the institution. I do not do so because I do not expect to be able to find a society where there will be no agriculture and therefore no destruction of some life. In fear and trembling, in humility and penance, I therefore participate in the injury inflicted on the monkeys, hoping some day to find a way out.

Even so did I participate in the three acts of war. I could not, it would be madness for me to sever my connection with the society to which I belong. And on those three occasions I had no thought of non-co-operating with the British Government. My position regarding the Government is totally different today and hence I should not voluntarily participate in its wars and I should risk imprisonment and even the gallows if I was forced to take up arms or otherwise take part in its military operations.

But that still does not solve the riddle. If there was a national government, whilst I should not take any direct part in any war I can conceive occasions when it would be my duty to vote for the military training of those who wish to take it. For I know that all its members do not believe in non-violence to the extent I do. It is not possible to make a person or a society non-violent by compulsion.

Non-violence works in a most mysterious manner. Often a man's actions defy analysis in terms of non-violence;

equally often his actions may wear the appearance of violence when he is absolutely non-violent in the highest sense of the term and is subsequently found so to be. All I can then claim for my conduct is that it was, in the instances cited, actuated in the interests of non-violence. There was no thought of sordid national or other interest. I do not believe in the promotion of national or any other interest at the sacrifice of some other interest.

I may not carry my argument any further. Language at best is but a poor vehicle for expressing one's thoughts in full. For me non-violence is not a mere philosophical principle. It is the rule and the breath of my life. I know I fail often, sometimes consciously, more often unconsciously. It is a matter not of the intellect but of the heart. True guidance comes by constant waiting upon God, by utmost humility, self-abnegation, by being ever ready to sacrifice one's self. Its practice requires fearlessness and courage of the highest order. I am painfully aware of my failings.

But the Light within me is steady and clear. There is no escape for any of us save through truth and non-violence. I know that war is wrong, is an unmitigated evil. I know too that it has got to go. I firmly believe that freedom won through bloodshed or fraud is no freedom. Would that all the acts alleged against me were found to be wholly indefensible rather than that by any act of mine non-violence was held to be compromised or that I was ever thought to be in favour of violence or untruth in any shape or form! Not violence, not untruth but non-violence, Truth is the law of our being. — *YI*, 13-9-28, 308.

In Relation to the Second World War

(A) SYMPATHY WITH THE ALLIES

451. And yet, strange as it may appear, my sympathies are wholly with the Allies. Willynilly this war is resolving itself into one between such democracy as the West has evolved and totalitarianism as it is typified in Herr Hitler. — *H*, 30-9-39, 288.

452. Both are fighting for their existence and for the furtherance of their policies. There is, however, this great

difference between the two: However incomplete or equivocal the declarations of th Allies are, the world has interpreted them to mean that they are ighting for saving democracy. Herr Hitler is fighting for the extension of the German boundaries, although he was told that he should allow his claims to be submitted to an impartial tribunal for examination. He contemptuously rejected the way of peace or persuasion and chose that of the sword. Hence my sympathy for the cause of the Allies. But my sympathy must not be interpreted to mean endorsement, in any shape or form, of the doctrine of the sword for the defence of even proved right. Proved right should be capable of being vindicated by right means as against the rude, i. e. sanguinary, means. — *H*, 14-10-39, 301.

453. One more question of the writer remains to be answered. If war is itself a wrong act, how can it be worthy of moral support or blessings? I believe all war to be wholly wrong. But if we scrutinize the motives of two warring parties, we may find one to be in the right and the other in the wrong. For instance, if A wishes to seize B's country, B is obviously the wronged one. Both fight with arms. I do not believe in violent warfare, but all the same B, whose cause is just, deserves my moral help and blessings. — *H*, 18-8-40, 250.

454. The writer cavils at my sympathy with the Allies. I have shown it as an out-and-out believer in non-violence, even because of my belief. Whilst all violence is bad and must be condemned in the abstract, it is permissible for, it is even the duty of, a believer in *ahimsa* to distinguish between the aggressor and the defender. Having done so, he will side with the defender in a non-violent manner, i. e. give his life in saving him. His intervention is likely to bring a speedier end to the duel and may even result in bringing about peace between the combatants. — *H*, 21-10-39, 309.

455. I do not want England to be defeated or humiliated. It hurts me to find St. Paul's Cathedral damaged. It hurts me as much as I would be hurt if I heard that the Kashi Vishvanath temple or the Juma Masjid was damaged. I would like to defend both the Kashi Vishvanath

temple and the Juma Masjid and even St. Paul's with my life, but would not take a single life for their defence. That is my fundamental difference with the British people. My sympathy is there with them nevertheless. Let there be no mistake on the part of Englishmen, Congressmen, or others whom my voice reaches, as to where my sympathy lies. It is not because I love the British nation and hate the German. I do not think that the Germans as a nation are any worse than the English, or the Italians are any worse. We are all tarred with the same brush; we are all members of the vast human family. I decline to draw any distinctions. I cannot claim any superiority for Indians. We have the same virtues and the same vices. Humanity is not divided into watertight compartments so that we cannot go from one to another. They may occupy one thousand rooms, but they are all related to one another. I would not say, 'India should be all in all, let the whole world perish.' That is not my message. India should be all in all, consistently with the well-being of other nations of the world. I can keep India intact and its freedom also intact only if I have goodwill towards the whole of the human family and not merely for the human family which inhabits this little spot of the earth called India. It is big enough compared to other smaller nations, but what is India in the wide world or in the universe? — *H*, 29-9-40, 304.

(B) Need of India's Freedom

456. **Letter to Chiang Kai-Shek**

Dear Generalissimo,

I can never forget the five hours' close contact I had with you and your noble wife in Calcutta. I had always felt drawn towards you in your fight for freedom, and that contact and our conversation brought China and her problems still nearer to me. Long ago, between 1905 and 1913, when I was in South Africa, I was in constant touch with the small Chinese colony in Johannesburg. I knew them first as clients and then as comrades in the Indian passive resistance struggle in South Africa. I came in touch with them in Mauritius also. I learnt then to admire their thrift, industry,

resourcefulness and internal unity. Later in India I had a very fine Chinese friend living with me for a few years and we all learnt to like him.

I have thus felt greatly attracted towards your great country and, in common with my countrymen, our sympathy has gone out to you in your terrible struggle. Our mutual friend Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, whose love of China is only excelled, if at all, by his love of his own country, has kept us in intimate touch with the developments of the Chinese struggle.

Because of this feeling I have towards China and my earnest desire that our two great countries should come closer to one another and co-operate to their mutual advantage, I am anxious to explain to you that my appeal to the British power to withdraw from India is not meant in any shape or form to weaken India's defence against the Japanese or embarrass you in your struggle. India must not submit to any aggressor or invader and must resist him. I would not be guilty of purchasing the freedom of my country at the cost of your country's freedom. That problem does not arise before me as I am clear that India cannot gain her freedom in this way, and a Japanese domination of either India or China would be equally injurious to the other country and to world peace. That domination must, therefore, be prevented, and I should like India to play her natural and rightful part in this.

I feel India cannot do so while she is in bondage. India has been a helpless witness of the withdrawals from Malaya, Singapore and Burma. We must learn the lesson from these tragic events and prevent by all means at our disposal a repetition of what befell these unfortunate countries. But unless we are free, we can do nothing to prevent it, and the same process might well occur again crippling India and China disastrously. I do not want a repetition of this tragic tale of woe.

Our proffered help has repeatedly been rejected by the British Government, and the recent failure of the Cripps Mission has left a deep wound which is still running. Out of the anguish has come the cry for immediate withdrawal

of British power so that India can look after herself and help China to the best of her ability.

I have told you of my faith in non-violence and of my belief in the effectiveness of this method if the whole nation could turn to it. That faith in it is as firm as ever. But I realize that India today as a whole has not that faith and belief, and the government in free India would be formed from the various elements composing the nation.

Today the whole of India is impotent and feels frustrated. The Indian army consists largely of people who have joined up because of economic pressure. They have no feeling of a cause to fight for, and in no sense are they a national army. Those of us who would fight for a cause, for India and China, with armed forces or with non-violence, cannot, under the foreign heel, function as they want to. And yet our people know for certain that India free can play even a decisive part not only on her own behalf, but also on behalf of China and world peace. Many, like me, feel that it is not proper or manly to remain in this helpless state and allow events to overwhelm us when a way to effective action can be open to us. They feel, therefore, that every possible effort should be made to ensure independence and that freedom of action which is so urgently needed. This is the origin of my appeal to the British power to end immediately the unnatural connection between Britain and India.

Unless we make that effort, there is a grave danger of public feeling in India going into wrong and harmful channels. There is every likelihood of subterranean sympathy for Japan growing simply in order to weaken and oust the British authority in India. This feeling may take the place of robust confidence in our ability never to look to outsiders for help in winning our freedom. We have to learn self-reliance and develop the strength to work our own salvation. This is only possible if we make a determined effort to free ourselves from bondage. That freedom has become a present necessity to enable us to take our due place among the free nations of the world.

To make it perfectly clear that we want to prevent in every way Japanese aggression, I would personally agree, and I am sure the government of free India would agree, that the Allied powers might, under treaty with us, keep their armed forces in India and use the country as a base for operations against the threatened Japanese attack.

I need hardly give you my assurance that, as the author of the new move in India, I shall take no hasty action. And whatever action I may recommend will be governed by the consideration that it should not injure China, or encourage Japanese aggression in India or China. I am trying to enlist world opinion in favour of a proposition which to me appears self-proved and which must lead to the strengthening of India's and China's defence. I am also educating public opinion in India and conferring with my colleagues. Needless to say, any movement against the British Government with which I may be connected will be essentially non-violent. I am straining every nerve to avoid a conflict with British authority. But if in the vindication of the freedom which has become an immediate desideratum, this becomes inevitable, I shall not hesitate to run any risk, however great.

Very soon you shall have completed five years of war against Japanese aggression and invasion and all the sorrow and misery that these have brought to China. My heart goes out to the people of China in deep sympathy and in admiration for their heroic struggle and endless sacrifices in the cause of their country's freedom and integrity against tremendous odds. I am convinced that this heroism and sacrifice cannot be in vain; they must bear fruit. To you, to Madame Chiang and to the great people of China, I send my earnest and sincere wishes of your success. I look forward to the day when a free India and a free China will co-operate together in friendship and brotherhood for their own good and for the good of Asia and the world.

In anticipation of your permission, I am taking the liberty of publishing this letter in the *Harijan*

Yours sincerely,
M. K. Gandhi

—*GC*, 230.

(C) Presence of Foreign Troops

457. Q. You consider it a vital necessity in terms of non-violence to allow the Allied troops to remain in India. You also say that, as you cannot present a foolproof non-violent method to prevent Japanese occupation of India, you cannot throw the Allies overboard. But, don't you consider that the non-violent force created by your action which will be sufficient to force the English to withdraw will be sufficiently strong to prevent Japanese occupation also? And is it not the duty of a non-violent resister to equally consider it a vital necessity to see that his country, his home and his all are not destroyed by allowing two foreign mad bulls to fight a deadly war on his soil?

A. There is an obvious fallacy in the question. I cannot all of a sudden produce in the minds of Britishers, who have been for centuries trained to rely upon their muscle for their protection, a belief which has not made a very visible impression even on the Indian mind. Non-violent force must not act in the same way as violence. The refusal to allow the Allied troops to operate on the Indian soil can only add to the irritation already caused by my proposal. The first is inevitable, the second would be wanton.

Again if the withdrawal is to take place, it won't be due merely to the non-violent pressure. And in any case what may be enough to affect the old occupant would be wholly different from what would be required to keep off the invader. Thus we can disown the authority of the British rulers by refusing taxes and in a variety of ways. These would be inapplicable to withstand the Japanese onslaught. Therefore, whilst we may be ready to face the Japanese, we may not ask the Britishers to give up their position of vantage merely on the unwarranted supposition that we would succeed by mere non-violent effort in keeping off the Japanese.

Lastly, whilst we must guard ourselves in our own way, our non-violence must preclude us from imposing on the British a strain which must break them. That would be a denial of our whole history for the past twentytwo years. — *H*, 5-7-42, 210.

458. I have to pay a heavy price for having drawn up an entrancing picture of a free India without a single British soldier. Friends are confounded now to discover that my proposal admits of the presence of British and even American troops under any circumstance at all.

It has been pointed out that not to consent to the Allied troops remaining in India during the period of the war is to hand over India and China to Japan, and to ensure the defeat of the Allied powers. This could never have been contemplated by me. The only answer, therefore, to give was to suffer the presence of the troops but under circumstances the reverse of the existing. . . . .

My proposal presupposes shedding of all fear and distrust. If we have confidence in ourselves, we need neither fear nor suspect the presence of Allied troops.

It will be most assuredly an event of the century and may be a turning-point in the war if Britain can honestly perform the act of renouncing India with all that the renunciation would mean. . . . .

As I have said already in the previous issue of *Harijan*, the British acceptance of my proposal may itself lead to a most honourable peace and hence automatic withdrawal of the troops. . . . .

It (non-violence) will express itself in her ambassadors going to the Axis powers not to beg for peace but to show them the futility of war for achieving an honourable end. This can only be done if and when Britain sheds the gains of perhaps the most organized and successful violence the world has seen.

All this may not come to pass. I do not mind. It is worth fighting for, it is worth staking all that the nation has. — *H*, 5-7-42, 212.

(D) MEANING OF WITHDRAWAL

459. Q. What is the meaning of your appeal to the British power to withdraw from India? You have written much recently on the subject. But there seems to be confusion in the public mind about your meaning.

A. So far as my own opinion is concerned, British authority should end completely irrespective of the wishes or demand of various parties. But I would recognize their own military necessity. They may need to remain in India for preventing Japanese occupation. That prevention is common cause between them and us. It may be necessary for the sake also of China. Therefore I would tolerate their presence in India not in any sense as of rulers but as allies of free India. This of course assumes that after the British declaration of withdrawal there will be a stable government established in India. Immediately the hindrance in the shape of a foreign power is altogether removed the union of parties should be an easy matter. The terms on which the Allied powers may operate will be purely for the Government of the free State to determine. The existing parties will have dissolved into the National Government. If they survive they will do so for party purposes and not for dealings with the external world. —*H*, 21-6-42 197.

(E) NON-VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATION

460. Q. There is a report about some new scheme that you want to propound in one of your *Harijan* articles about non-violent non-co-operation if any invader came to India. Could you give us an idea ?

A. It is wrong. I have no plan in mind. If I had, I should give it to you. But I think nothing more need be added when I have said that there should be unadulterated non-violent non-co-operation and if the whole of India responded and unanimously offered it, I should show that without shedding a single drop of blood, Japanese arms — or any combination of arms — can be sterilized. That involves the determination of India not to give quarter on any point whatsoever and to be ready to risk loss of several million lives. But I would consider that cost very cheap and victory won at the cost glorious. That India may not be ready to pay that price may be true. I hope it is not true, but some such price must be paid by any country that wants to retain its independence. After all, the sacrifice made by the Russians and the Chinese is enormous, and they are ready to risk all. The same could be said of the other countries also, whether

aggressors or defenders. The cost is enormous. Therefore, in the non-violent technique I am asking India to risk no more than other countries are risking and which India would have to risk even if she offered armed resistance.

Q. But unadulterated non-violent non-co-operation has not been successful against Great Britain. How will it succeed against a new aggressor?

A. I combat the statement altogether. Nobody has yet told me that non-violent non-co-operation, unadulterated, has not succeeded. It has not been offered, it is true. Therefore, you can say that what has not been offered hitherto is not likely to be offered suddenly when India faces the Japanese arms. I can only hope that, in the face of danger, India would be readier to offer non-violent non-co-operation. Perhaps India is accustomed to British rule for so many years that the Indian mind or India's masses do not feel the pinch so much as the advent of a new power would be felt. But your question is well put. It is possible that India may not be able to offer non-violent non-co-operation. But a similar question may be put regarding armed resistance. Several attempts have been made and they have not succeeded, therefore it will not succeed against the Japanese. That leads us to the absurd conclusion that India will never be ready for gaining independence, and seeing that I cannot subscribe to any such proposition, I must try again and again till India is ready to respond to the call of non-violent non-co-operation. But if India does not respond to that call then India must respond to the call of some leader or some organization, wedded to violence. For instance, the Hindu Mahasabha is trying to rouse the Hindu mind for an armed conflict. It remains to be seen whether that attempt succeeds. I for one do not believe it will succeed. —*H*, 24-5-42, 167.

461. The fact is that non-violence does not work in the same way as violence. It works in the opposite way. An armed man naturally relies upon his arms. A man who is intentionally unarmed relies upon the unseen force called God by poets, but called the unknown by scientists. But that which is unknown is not necessarily non-existent. God is

the Force among all forces known and unknown. Non-violence without reliance upon that Force is poor stuff to be thrown in the dust.

I hope now my critic realizes the error underlying his question and that he sees also that the doctrine that has guided my life is not one of inaction but of the highest action. His question should really have been put thus:

'How is it that, in spite of your work in India for over twentytwo years, there are not sufficient *satyagrahis* who can cope with external and internal menaces?' My answer then would be that twentytwo years are nothing in the training of a nation for the development of non-violent strength. That is not to say that a large number of persons will not show that strength on due occasion. That occasion seems to have come now. This war puts the civilian on his mettle no less than the military man, non-violent no less than violent. —*H*, 28-6-42, 201.

(F) WHAT WOULD FREE INDIA DO?

462. Gandhiji had over and over again said that an orderly withdrawal would result in a sullen India becoming a friend and ally. These American friends now explored the implications of that possible friendship: 'Would a free India declare war against Japan?'

'Free India need not do so. It simply becomes the ally of the Allied powers, simply out of gratefulness for the payment of a debt, however overdue. Human nature thanks the debtor when he discharges the debt.'

'How then would this alliance fit in with India's non-violence?'

'It is a good question. The *whole* of India is not non-violent. If the whole of India had been non-violent, there would have been no need for my appeal to Britain, nor would there be any fear of a Japanese invasion. But my non-violence is represented possibly by a hopeless minority, or perhaps by India's dumb millions who are temperamentally non-violent. But there too the question may be asked: "What have they done?" They have done nothing, I agree; but they may act when the supreme test comes, or they

may not. I have no non-violence of millions to present to Britain, and what we have had been discounted by the British as non-violence of the weak. And so all I have done is to make this appeal on the strength of bare inherent justice, so that it might find an echo in the British heart. It is made from a moral plane, and even as they do not hesitate to act desperately in the physical field and take grave risks, let them for once act desperately on the moral field and declare that India is independent today, irrespective of India's demand'. — *H*, 14-6-42, 187.

463. 'You desire to have India's freedom in order to help the Allies?', was Mr. Edgar Snow's question, and the last question. 'Will Free India carry out total mobilization and adopt the methods of total war ?'

'That question is legitimate,' said Gandhiji, 'but it is beyond me. I can only say Free India will make common cause with the Allies. I cannot say that Free India will take part in militarism or choose to go the non-violent way. But I can say without hesitation that if I can turn India to non-violence I will certainly do so. If I succeed in converting forty crores of people to non-violence, it will be a tremendous thing, a wonderful transformation.'

'But you won't oppose a militarist effort by civil disobedience ?' Mr. Snow pertinently asked.

'I have no such desire. I cannot oppose Free India's will with civil disobedience. It would be wrong.' — *H*, 19-7-42, 234.

(G) What about Non-violence?

464. Q. But what about your non-violence? To what extent will you carry out your policy after freedom is gained ?

A. The question hardly arises. I am using the first personal pronoun for brevity, but I am trying to represent the spirit of India as I conceive it. It is and will be a mixture. What policy the National Government will adopt I cannot say. I may not even survive it much as I would love to. If I do, I would advise the adoption of non-violence to the utmost extent possible and that will be India's great

contribution to the peace of the world and the establishment of a new world order. I expect that with the existence of so many martial races in India, all of whom will have a voice in the government of the day, the national policy will incline towards militarism of a modified character. I shall certainly hope that all the effort for the last twentytwo years to show the efficacy of non-violence as a political force will not have gone in vain and a strong party representing true non-violence will exist in the country. In every case a Free India in alliance with the Allied powers must be of great help to their cause, whereas India held in bondage as she is today must be a drag upon the war-chariot and may prove a source of real danger at the most critical moment. — *H*, 21-6-42, 197.

XIII

SATYAGRAHA

465. I have no set theory to go by. I have not worked out the science of *satyagraha* in its entirety. I am still groping. You can join me in my quest if it appeals to you and you feel the call. — *H*, 27-5-39, 136.

A Call for Adventure

466. If we are to make progress, we must not repeat history but make new history. We must add to the inheritance left by our ancestors. If we may make new discoveries and inventions in the phenomenal world, must we declare our bankruptcy in the spiritual domain ? Is it impossible to multiply the exceptions so as to make them the rule ? Must man always be brute first and man after, if at all ? —*YI*, 6-5-26, 164.

Satyagraha : Its Theory and Practice

467. The term Passive Resistance does not fit the activity of the Indian community during the past eight years. Its equivalent in the vernacular rendered into English means Truth-Force. I think Tolstoy called it also Soul-Force

or Love-Force, and so it is. Carried out to its utmost limit, this force is independent of pecuniary or other material assistance; certainly, even in its elementary form, of physical force or violence. Indeed, violence is the negation of this great spiritual force which can only be cultivated or wielded by those who will entirely eschew violence. It is a force that may be used by individuals as well as by communities. It may be used as well in political as in domestic affairs. Its universal applicability is a demonstration of its permanence and invincibility. It can be used alike by men, women and children. It is totally untrue to say that it is a force to be used only by the weak so long as they are not capable of meeting violence by violence. This superstition arises from the incompleteness of the English expression. It is impossible for those who consider themselves to be weak to apply this force. Only those who realize that there is something in man which is superior to the brute nature in him, and that the latter always yields to it, can effectively be passive resisters. This force is to violence and, therefore, to all tyranny, all injustice, what light is to darkness. In politics, its use is based upon the immutable maxim that government of the people is possible only so long as they consent either consciously or unconsciously to be governed. We did not want to be governed by the Asiatic Act of 1907 of the Transvaal and it had to go before this mighty force. Two courses were open to us — to use violence when we were called upon to submit to the Act, or to suffer the penalties prescribed under the Act, and thus to draw out and exhibit the force of the soul within us for a period long enough to appeal to the sympathetic chord in the governors or the law-makers. We have taken long to achieve what we set about striving for. That was because our passive resistance was not of the most complete type. All passive resisters do not understand the full value of the force, nor have we men who always from conviction refrain from violence. The use of this force requires the adoption of poverty, in the sense that we must be indifferent whether we have the wherewithal to feed or clothe ourselves. During the past struggle, all passive resisters, if any at all, were not prepared to go

that length. Some again were only passive resisters so-called. They came without any conviction, often with mixed motives, less often with impure motives. Some even, whilst engaged in the struggle, would gladly have resorted to violence but for most vigilant supervision. Thus it was that the struggle became prolonged; for the exercise of the purest soul-force, in its perfect form, brings about instantaneous relief. For this exercise, prolonged training of the individual soul is an absolute necessity so that a perfect passive resister has to be almost, if not entirely, a perfect man. We cannot all suddenly become such men, but if my proposition is correct — as I know it to be correct — the greater the spirit of passive resistance in us, the better men we will become. Its use, therefore, is, I think, indisputable, and it is a force which, if it became universal, would revolutionize social ideals and do away with despotisms and the ever-growing militarism under which the nations of the West are groaning and are being almost crushed to death — that militarism which promises to overwhelm even the nations of the East. If the past struggle has produced even a few Indians who would dedicate themselves to the task of becoming passive resisters as nearly perfect as possible, they would not only have served themselves in the truest sense of the term, they would also have served humanity at large. Thus viewed, passive resistance is the noblest and the best education. It should come, not after the ordinary education in letters of children, but it should precede it. It will not be denied that a child, before it begins to write its alphabet and to gain worldly knowledge, should know what the soul is, what truth is, what love is, what powers are latent in the soul. It should be an essential of real education that a child should learn that, in the struggle of life, it can easily conquer hate by love, untruth by truth, violence by self-suffering. It was because I felt the force of this truth that, during the latter part of the struggle, I endeavoured as much as I could to train the children at Tolstoy Farm and then at Phoenix along these lines, and one of the reasons for my departure to India is still further to realize as I already do in part, my own

imperfection as a passive resister and then to try to perfect myself; for I believe that it is in India that the nearest approach to perfection is most possible. — *Nat*, 189.

468. Let no one understand that a non-violent army is open only to those who strictly enforce in their lives all the implications of non-violence. It is open to all those who accept the implications and make an ever-increasing endeavour to observe them. There never will be an army of perfectly non-violent people. It will be formed of those who will honestly endeavour to observe non-violence. — *H*, 21-7-40, 214.

Satyagraha, distinguished from Passive Resistance

(A) Its Active Character

469. Non-co-operation is not a passive state, it is an intensely active state,— more active than physical resistance or violence. Passive resistance is a misnomer. — *YI*, 25-8-20, *Tagore*, 322.

(B) Satyagrahis, Subject to a Higher Law

470. A *satyagrahi* sometimes appears momentarily to disobey laws and the constituted authority only to prove in the end his regard for both. — *Nat*, 302.

471. Disobedience to the law of the State becomes a peremptory duty when it comes in conflict with the law of God. — *ER*, 45.

(C) No Room for Violence

472. While in passive resistance there is scope for the use of arms when a suitable occasion arrives, in *satyagraha* physical force is forbidden even in the most favourable circumstances.

In passive resistance there is always present an idea of harassing the other party and there is a simultaneous readiness to undergo any hardships entailed upon us by such activity; while in *satyagraha* there is not the remotest idea of injuring the opponent. *Satyagraha* postulates the conquest of the adversary by suffering in one's own person. — *SA*, 179.

473. Non-violence is never a method of coercion, it is one of conversion. We have failed to convert the Princes, we have failed to convert the English administrators. It is no use saying that it is impossible to persuade persons willingly to part with their power. I have claimed that *satyagraha* is a new experiment. It will be time to pronounce it a failure when Congressmen have given it a genuine trial. Even a policy, if it is honestly pursued, has to be pursued with all one's heart. We have not done so. Hence Congressmen have to convert themselves before the Paramount Power and the Princes can be expected to act justly. —*H*, 8-7-39, 193.

(D) LOVE, NOT HATRED, THE MOTIVE

474. While there is no scope for love in passive resistance, hatred has no place in *satyagraha* but is a positive breach of its ruling principle. —*SA*, 178.

475. Passive resistance is a negative thing, and has nothing to do with the active principle of love. *Satyagraha* proceeds on the active principle of love which says, 'Love those that despitefully use you. It is easy for you to love your friends. But I say unto you, love your enemies.' —*H*, 14-5-38, 111.

476. It is never the intention of a *satyagrahi* to embarrass the wrongdoer. The appeal is never to his fear; it is, must be, always to his heart. The *satyagrahi's* object is to convert, not to coerce, the wrongdoer. He should avoid artificiality in all his doings. He acts naturally and from inward conviction. —*H*, 25-3-39, 64.

(E) RESPECTING THE ADVERSARY

477. Whilst we may attack measures and systems, we may not, must not, attack men. Imperfect ourselves, we must be tender towards others and be slow to impute motives. —*YI*, 25-5-21, 164.

478. Immediately we begin to think of things as our opponents think of them we shall be able to do them full justice. I know that this requires a detached state of mind, and it is a state very difficult to reach. Nevertheless for a *satyagrahi* it is absolutely essential. Three-fourths of the miseries and misunderstandings of the world will disappear, if we step into the shoes of our adversaries and understand

their standpoint. We will then agree with our adversaries quickly or think of them charitably. In our case there is no question of our agreeing with them quickly as our ideals are radically different. But we may be charitable to them and believe that they actually mean what they say. They do not want to open the roads to the unapproachables.* Now whether it is their self-interest or ignorance that tells them to say so, we really believe that it is wrong of them to say so. Our business therefore is to show them that they are in the wrong and we should do so by *our* suffering. I have found that mere appeal to reason does not answer where prejudices are agelong and based on supposed religious authority. Reason has to be strengthened by suffering and suffering opens the eyes of understanding. Therefore there must be no trace of compulsion in our acts. We must not be impatient, and we must have an undying faith in the means we are adopting. — *YI*, 19-3-25, 95.

479. Our motto must ever be conversion by gentle persuasion and a constant appeal to the head and the heart. We must therefore be ever courteous and patient with those who do not see eye to eye with us. We must resolutely refuse to consider our opponents as enemies of the country. — *YI*, 29-9-21, 306.

480. The end of non-violent 'war' is always an agreement, never dictation, much less humiliation of the opponent. — *H*, 23-3-40, 53.

481. A *satyagrahi* bids goodbye to fear. He is therefore never afraid to trusting the opponent. Even if the opponent plays him false twenty times, the *satyagrahi* is ready to trust him the twentyfirst time, for an implicit trust in human nature is the very essence of his creed. — *SA*. 246.

(F) NON-CO-OPERATING, NOT WITH A PART, BUT WITH THE WHOLE SYSTEM

482. I was faced with the very question as the author of the Non-co-operation Movement. I said to myself, there is no State run by Nero or Mussolini which has not good points about it, but we have to reject the whole, once we decide to non-co-operate with the system. 'There are in

* Reference is to the Satyagraha in Vaikom.

our country grand public roads, and palatial educational institutions', said I to myself, 'but they are part of a system which crushes the nation. I should not have anything to do with them. They are like the fabled snake with a brilliant jewel on its head, but which has fangs full of poison.' So I came to the conclusion that the British rule in India had crushed the spirit of the nation and stunted its growth, and so I decided to deny myself all the privileges, services, courts, titles. The policy would vary with different countries but sacrifice and self-denial are the essential points. What Einstein has said would occur only once a year and only with a very few people.* But I suggest as your first duty to non-co-operate with the State.

Non-co-operation in military services and service in non-military matters are not compatible. 'Definitely' military service is an ill-chosen word. You are all the while giving military service by deputy because you are supporting a State which is based on military service. You will have to extend the scope of non-co-operation (from mere refusal to serve in war) to (the non-payment of) your taxes. — *YI*, 31-12-31, 426, 427.

483. Why should not British pacifists stand aside and remodel their life in its entirety? They might be unable to bring about peace outright, but they would lay a solid foundation for it and give the surest test of their faith. When, in the face of an upheaval such as we are witnessing, there are only a few individuals of immovable faith, they have to live up to their faith even though they may produce no visible effect on the course of events. They should believe that their action will produce tangible results in due course. Their staunchness is bound to attract sceptics. I would also suggest that individuals like Dr. Maude Royden are not mere camp followers. They are leaders. Therefore, they have to live their lives in strict accord with the Sermon on the Mount, and they will find immediately that there is much to give up and much to remodel. The greatest thing that they have to deny themselves is the fruit of imperialism. — *H*, 15-3-42, 73.

* Refusing to serve in war in order to chasten the State.

Non-co-operation, Progressive in Character

484. The power of suggestion is such, that a man at last becomes what he believes himself to be. If we are *satyagrahis* and offer *satyagraha* believing ourselves to be strong, two clear consequences result from it. Fostering the idea of strength, we grow stronger and stronger every day. With the increase in our strength our *satyagraha* too becomes more effective and we would never be casting about for an opportunity to give it up. —*SA*, 178.

485. The clearest possible definition of the goal and its appreciation would fail to take us there, if we do not know and utilize the means of achieving it. I have, therefore, concerned myself principally with the conservation of the means and their progressive use. — *ABP*, 17-9-33.

486. My experience has taught me that a law of progression applies to every righteous struggle. But in the case of *satyagraha* the law amounts to an axiom. As a *satyagraha* struggle progresses onward, many another element helps to swell its current, and there is a constant growth in the results to which it leads. This is really inevitable, and is bound up with the first principles of *satyagraha*. For in *satyagraha* the minimum is also the maximum, and as it is the irreducible minimum, there is no question of retreat, and the only movement possible is an advance. In other struggles, even when they are righteous, the demand is first pitched a little higher so as to admit of future reduction, and hence the law of progression does not apply to all of them without exception. — *SA*, 319.

Basic Assumptions for Successful Satyagraha

487. 1. There must be common honesty among *satyagrahis*.
2. They must render heart discipline to their commander. There should be no mental reservation.
3. They must be prepared to lose all, not merely their personal liberty, not merely their possessions, land, cash, etc. but also the liberty and possessions of their families, and they must be ready cheerfully to face bullets, bayonets, or even slow death by torture.

4. They must not be violent in thought, word or deed towards the 'enemy' or among themselves. — *H*, 22-10-38, 298.

488. Those only can take up civil disobedience, who believe in willing obedience even to irksome laws imposed by the State so long as they do not hurt their conscience or religion, and are prepared equally willingly to suffer the penalty of civil disobedience. Disobedience to be civil has to be absolutely non-violent, the underlying principle being the winning over of the opponent by suffering, i. e. love. — *YI*, 3-11-21, 346

Cultivation of the Democratic Spirit, Essential for the Satyagrahi

489. A born democrat is a born disciplinarian. Democracy comes naturally to him who is habituated normally to yield willing obedience to all laws, human or divine. I claim to be a democrat both by instinct and training. Let those who are ambitious to serve democracy qualify themselves by satisfying first this acid test of democracy. Moreover, a democrat must be utterly selfless. He must think and dream not in terms of self or party but only of democracy. Only then does he acquire the right of civil disobedience. I do not want anybody to give up his convictions or to suppress himself. I do not believe that a healthy and honest difference of opinion will injure our cause. But opportunism, camouflage or patched up compromises certainly will. If you must dissent, you should take care that your opinions voice your innermost convictions and are not intended merely as a convenient party cry.

I value individual freedom but you must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to his present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress. Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle. We have learnt to strike the mean between individual freedom and social restraint. Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the wellbeing of the whole society, enriches both the individual and the society of which one is a member. — *H*, 27-5-39, 136, 144.

The Right of Civil Disobedience

490. Most people do not understand the complicated machinery of the government. They do not realize that every citizen silently but none the less certainly sustains the government of the day in ways of which he has no knowledge. Every citizen therefore renders himself responsible for every act of his government. And it is quite proper to support it so long as the actions of the government are bearable. But when they hurt him and his nation, it becomes his duty to withdraw his support. — *YI*, 28-7-20, *Tagore*, 242.

491. It is true that in the vast majority of cases, it is the duty of a subject to submit to wrongs on failure of the usual procedure, so long as they do not affect his vital being. But every nation and every individual have the right, and it is their duty, to rise against an intolerable wrong. I do not believe in armed risings. They are a remedy worse than the disease sought to be cured. They are a token of the spirit of revenge and impatience and anger. The method of violence cannot do good in the long run. Witness the effect of the armed rising of the Allied powers against Germany. Have they not become even like the Germans, as the latter have been depicted to us by them?

We have a better method. Unlike that of violence it certainly involves the exercise of restraint and patience; but it requires also resoluteness of will. This method is to refuse to be party to the wrong. No tyrant has ever yet succeeded in his purpose without carrying the victim with him, it may be, as it often is, by force. Most people choose rather to yield to the will of the tyrant than to suffer for the consequence of resistance. Hence does terrorism form part of the stock-in-trade of the tyrant. But we have instances in history where terrorism has failed to impose the terrorist's will upon his victim. India has choice before her now. If then the acts of the Punjab Government be an insufferable wrong, if the report of Lord Hunter's Committee and the two despatches be a greater wrong by reason of their grievous condonation of these acts, it is clear that we must refuse to submit to this official violence.

Appeal to the Parliament by all means, if necessary, but if the Parliament fails us and if we are worthy to call ourselves a nation, we must refuse to uphold the Government by withdrawing co-operation from it. — *YI*, 9-6-20, *Tagore*, 80.

492. Complete civil disobedience is rebellion without the element of violence in it. An out-and-out civil resister simply ignores the authority of the State. He becomes an outlaw claiming to disregard every unmoral State law. Thus, for instance, he may refuse to pay taxes, he may refuse to recognize the authority of the State in his daily intercourse. He may refuse to obey the law of trespass and claim to enter military barracks in order to speak to the soldiers, he may refuse to submit to limitations upon the manner of picketing and may picket within the proscribed area. In doing all this he never uses force and never resists force when it is used against him. In fact, he invites imprisonment and other uses of force against himself. This he does because and when he finds the bodily freedom he seemingly enjoys to be an intolerable burden. He argues to himself, that a State allows personal fteedom only in so far as the citizen submits to its regulations. Submission to the State law is the price a citizen pays for his personal liberty. Submission, therefore, to a State law wholly or largely unjust is an immoral barter for liberty. A citizen who thus realizes the evil nature of a State is not satisfied to live on its sufferance, and therefore appears to the others who do not share his belief to be a nuisance to society whilst he is endeavouring to compel the State, without committing a moral breach, to arrest him. Thus considered, civil resistance is a most powerful expression of a soul's anguish and an eloquent protest against the continuance of an evil State. Is not this the history of all reform? Have not reformers, much to the disgust of their fellows, discarded even innocent symbols associated with an evil practice?

When a body of men disown the State under which they have hitherto lived, they nearly establish their own government. I say nearly, for they do not go to the point of using force when they are resisted by the State. Their 'business', as of the individual, is to be locked up or shot by

the State, unless it recognizes their separate existence, in other words bows to their will. Thus three thousand Indians in South Africa after due notice to the Government of the Transvaal crossed the Transvaal border in 1914 in defiance of the Transvaal Immigration Law and compelled Government to arrest them. When it failed to provoke them to violence or to coerce them into submission, it yielded to their demand. A body of civil resisters is, therefore, like an army subject to all the discipline of a soldier, only harder because of want of excitement of an ordinary soldier's life. And as a civil resistance army is or ought to be free from passion because free from the spirit of retaliation, it requires the fewest number of soldiers. Indeed one PERFECT civil resister is enough to win the battle of Right against Wrong. — *YI*, 10-11-21, 362.

Respecting Differences of Opinion among Co-workers

493. It is a bad habit to say that another man's thoughts are bad and ours only are good and that those holding different views from ours are the enemies of the country. — *IHR*, 4.

494. Let us honour our opponents for the same honesty of purpose and patriotic motives that we claim for ourselves. — *YI*, 4-6-25, 193.

495. It is true that I have often been let down. Many have deceived me and many have been found wanting. But I do not repent of my association with them. For I know how to non-co-operate, as I know how to co-operate. The most practical, the most dignified way of going on in the world is to take people at their word, when you have no positive reason to the contrary. — *YI*, 26-12-24, 430.

No Compulsion in Satyagraha

496. Our tyranny, if we impose our will on others, will be infinitely worse than that of the handful of Englishmen who form the bureaucracy. Theirs is a terrorism imposed by a minority struggling to exist in the midst of opposition. Ours will be a terrorism imposed by a majority and therefore worse and really more godless than the first. We must therefore eliminate compulsion in any shape from our struggle. If we are only a handful holding freely the doctrine of

non-co-operation, we may have to die in the attempt to convert others to our view, but we shall have truly defended and represented our cause. If however we enlist under our banner men by force, we shall be denying our cause and God, and if we seem to succeed for the moment, we shall have succeeded in establishing a worse terror.

We shall also retard our cause if we suppress opinion by intolerance. For then we shall never know who is with us and who is against us. The indispensable condition therefore of success is that we encourage the greatest freedom of opinion. It is the least we can learn from the present 'masters'. Their Penal Code contains drastic punishments for holding opinions they do not like. And they have arrested some of the noblest of our countrymen for expression of their opinion. Our non-co-operation is a defiantly open protest against that system. We may not in the very act of fighting the restraint on opinion be guilty ourselves of imposing it on others. — *YI*, 27-10-21, 342.

Satyagraha and the Masses

497. I do not rely merely upon the lawyer class or highly educated men to enable the Non-co-operation Committee to carry out all the stages of non-co-operation. My hope lies with the masses so far as the later stages of non-co-operation are concerned. — *YI*, 18-8-20, *Tagore*, 370.

498. His Excellency has been misled by his advisers in believing that non-co-operationists have only now turned their attention to the masses. Indeed, they are our sheet-anchor. But we are not going to tamper with them. We shall continue patiently to educate them politically till they are ready for safe action. There need be no mistake about our goal. As soon as we feel reasonably confident of non-violence continuing among them in spite of provoking executions, we shall certainly call upon the sepoy to lay down his arms and the peasantry to suspend payment of taxes. We are hoping that that time may never be reached. We shall leave no stone unturned to avoid such a serious step. But we will not flinch when the moment has come and the need has arisen. — *YI*, 9-3-21, 76.

Can the Masses Remain Non-violent ?

499. Q. How do you think that the masses can practise non-violence, when we know that they are all prone to anger, hate, ill-will ? They are known to fight for the most trivial things.

A. They are, and yet I think they can practise non-violence for the common good. Do you think that the thousands of women that collected contraband salt had ill-will against anyone ? They knew that the Congress or Gandhi had asked them to do certain things, and they did those things in faith and hope. To my mind the most perfect demonstration of non-violence was in Champaran. Did the thousands of ryots who rose up in revolt against the agrarian evils harbour the least ill-will against the Government or the planters ? Their belief in non-violence was unintelligent, even as the belief in the earth being round with many is unintelligent. But their belief in their leaders was genuine, and that was enough. With those who lead it is another matter. Their belief has got to be intelligent, and they have to live up to all the implications of the belief.

Q. But then are not the masses the world over like that ?

A. They are not, for others have not that background of non-violence.

Q. But if there was non-violence ingrained in our masses, how should they have come to this state of slavery ?

A. There indeed is what I flatter myself is going to be my contribution. I want that non-violence of the weak to become non-violence of the brave. It may be a dream, but I have to strive for its realization. — *H*, 4-11-39, 332.

500. Q. Believing that mass revolution is the only means to achieve freedom, do you believe it a practical proposition that the mass will and can remain absolutely non-violent in thought and action in spite of all possible provocations in the course of such revolution ? It may be possible for an individual to attain that standard but do you think that it is possible for the masses to attain that standard of non-violence in action ?

A. This is a strange question coming from you at this time of the day, for the entire course of our non-violent fight bears testimony to the fact that wherever violence has broken out it has broken out not on the part of the masses but, if I may put it like that, on the part of the classes, that is, it was manipulated by the intellectuals. Even in violent fighting though the individual sometimes lets himself go and forgets everything, the mass of the fighting force dares not and does not. It resorts to arms only under orders and has to suspend fire in response to orders, no matter how great the individual impulse to revenge or retaliation might be. There is no *prima facie* reason why under non-violence the mass, if disciplined, should be incapable of showing the discipline which in organized warfare a fighting force normally does. Besides, a non-violent general has this special advantage: he does not require thousands of leaders to successfully carry on his fight. The non-violent message does not require so many for trasmission. The example of a few true men or women if they have fully imbibed the spirit of non-violence is bound to infect the whole mass in the end. This was just what I experienced in the beginning of the movement. I found that people actually believed that in my heart of hearts I favoured violence even when I preached non-violence. That was the way they had been trained to read and interpret the utterances of the leaders. But when they realized that I meant what I said, they did observe non-violence indeed under the most trying circumstances. There has been no repetition of Chauri Chaura. As for non-violence in thought God alone is judge. But this much is certain that non-violence in action cannot be sustained unless it goes hand in hand with non-violence in thought. —*ABP*, 3-8-34.

Caution in Mass-movements

501. The greatest care is necessary at the present moment when violence, not non-violence, seems to pervade the air. Indeed it may be reasonably argued that in an atmosphere surcharged with violence there is no scope for

non-violence. This argument may be carried too far, so far that non-violence may be made wholly ineffective; whereas it is claimed to be the only effective force for counteracting violence no matter how terrible. But when violence pervades the air the expression of non-violence may not be through civil disobedience. And if it is to be civil disobedience, it must be hedged in by adequate restrictions. In *satyagraha*, it is never the numbers that count; it is always the quality, more so when the forces of violence are uppermost. —*H*, 25-3-39, 64.

502. Since *satyagraha* is one of the most powerful methods of direct action, a *satyagrahi* exhausts all other means before he resorts to *satyagraha*. He will therefore constantly and continually approach the constituted authority, he will appeal to public opinion, educate public opinion, state his case calmly and coolly before everybody, who wants to listen to him, and only after he has exhausted all these avenues will he resort to *satyagraha*. But when he has found the impelling call of the inner voice within him and launches out upon *satyagraha* he has burnt his boats and there is no receding. — *YI*, 20-10-27,353.

503. I am not going to take a single step in non-co-operation unless I am satisfied that the country is ready for that step. — *YI*, 18-8-20, *Tagore*, 369.

504. A full grasp of the conditions of successful civil resistance is necessary at least on the part of the representatives of the people before we can launch out upon an enterprise of such magnitude. The quickest remedies are always fraught with the greatest danger and require the utmost skill in handling them. — *YI*, 4-8-21, 244.

505. So far as response is concerned, I agree with the editor that the quickest and the largest response is to be expected in the matter of suspension of payment of taxes, but as I have said, so long as the masses are not educated to appreciate the value of non-violence even whilst their holdings are being sold, so long must it be difficult to take up the last stage in any appreciable extent. — *YI*, 18-8-20, *Tagore*, 328.

506. We must not resort to non-payment because of the possibility of a ready response. The readiness is a fatal temptation. Such non-payment will not be civil or non-violent, but it will be criminal and fraught with the greatest possibility of violence. Not until the peasantry is trained to understand the reason and the virtue of *civil* non-payment and is prepared to look with calm resignation upon the confiscation of their holdings and the forced sale of their cattle and other belongings, may they be advised to withhold payment of taxes. — *YI*, 26-1-22, 57.

507. In the midst of an enervating atmosphere such as ours, the duty before non-co-operators is clear. They must keep exemplary patience. They must not be goaded into precipitate action. They must refuse battle where they are not ready. — *YI*, 26-1-22, 56.

508. Suffering has its well-defined limits. Suffering can be both wise and unwise, and when the limit is reached, to prolong it would be not unwise but the height of folly. — *YI*, 12-3-31, 30.

509. (But) there is no time limit for a *satyagrahi*, nor is there a limit to his capacity for suffering. Hence there is no such thing as defeat in *satyagraha*. — *YI*, 19-2-25, 61.

510. Repression does good only to those who are prepared for it. — *YI*, 9-4-25, 124.

511. A *satyagrahi* goes to prison, not to embarrass the authorities but to convert them by demonstrating to them his innocence. You should realize that unless you have developed the moral fitness to go to prison, which the law of *satyagraha* demands, your jail-going will be useless and will bring you nothing but disappointment in the end. — *H*, 5-11-38, 315.

Instruction to Satyagrahis

512. It is the essence of *satyagraha* that those who are suffering should alone offer it. Cases can be conceived when what may be termed sympathetic *satyagraha* may be legitimately applied. The idea underlying *satyagraha* is to convert the wrongdoer, to awaken the sense of justice in him, to show him also that without the co-operation direct,

or indirect, of the wronged the wrong-doer cannot do the wrong intended by him. If the people in either case are not ready to suffer for their causes, no outside help in the shape of *satyagraha* can possibly bring true deliverance. — *H*, 10-12-38, 369.

513. No organization can be run with success if its members, especially its officers, refuse to carry out its policy and hold on to it in spite of opposition to it. For winning Swaraj one requires iron discipline. Let this friend and those who think with him realize that we are engaged in the very difficult and delicate task of wresting authority from an organization whose members are able, industrious, intelligent, brave and above all trained in the habits of exact discipline. — *YI*, 28-8-24, 285.

514. I regard you as soldiers in this campaign. It is not possible to reason out things for ourselves. You have come to the Ashram because you have faith in the management. That does not mean faith in me. For I am not the manager. I am directing the movement so far as the ideals and general direction are concerned. Your faith therefore must be in those who are managers for the time being. The choice before coming to the Ashram was yours. But having made your choice and come to the Ashram it is not for you to reason why. If we are to become a powerful nation you must obey all directions that may be given from time to time. This is the only way in which either political or religious life can be built up. You must have determined for yourselves certain principles and you must have joined the struggle in obedience to these principles. Those who remain in the Ashram are taking as much part in the struggle as those who go and offer *satyagraha* at the barricades. Every piece of work in connection with the struggle is just as important as any other piece, and therefore the work of sanitation in the Ashram is just as important as spinning away at the barricades. And if in this place the work of cleaning the closets and compound is more distasteful than spinning, it should be considered far more important and profitable. Not a single minute should be wasted in idle conversation, but we must be absorbed in the work before

us and if every one of us work in that spirit you will see that there is pleasure in work itself. Every bit of property, anything in the Ashram should be regarded by you as your own property and not property that can be wasted at pleasure. You may not waste a grain of rice or a scrap of paper, and similarly a minute of your time. It is not ours. It belonge to the nation and we are trustees for the use of it.* — *YI*, 19-3-25, 95.

515. I admit that there is 'a doubtful proportion of full believers' in my 'theory of non-violence.' But it should not be forgotten that I have also said that for my movement I do not at all need believers in the theory of non-violence, full or imperfect. It is enough if people carry out the rules of non-violent action. — *GC*, 169.

516. Freedom of four hundred million people through purely non-violent effort is not to be gained without learning the virtue of iron discipline — not imposed from without, but sprung naturally from within. Without the requisite discipline non-violence can only be a veneer. — *HS*, 6-8-44.

Publicity in Satyagraha

517. I believe that a struggle which chiefly relies upon internal strength cannot be wholly carried on without a newspaper, and it is also my experience that we could not perhaps have educated the local Indian community, nor kept Indians all over the world in touch with the course of events in South Africa in any other way, with the same ease and success as through *Indian Opinion*, which therefore was certainly a most useful and potent weapon in our struggle.

As the community was transformed in course of and as a result of the struggle, so was *Indian Opinion*. — *SA*, 221.

518. Any day the Government may prohibit the use of the telegraph, the post, the rail, and the press by non-co-operationists. Will it stop the struggle for a single minute? I hope not. It has been conceived so as to be independent of Government sufferance. For it depends for success upon

* This was said to members of the Ashram at Vykom during the *Satyagraha*, when barricades were erected to prevent *satyagrahis* from entering into the streets.

its universality. Non-co-operation by stray individuals is, no doubt, possible and conceivable. It has then to take a somewhat different shape. But when the spirit of it pervades the whole of India, we need not feel dependent upon the telegraph, the post, the rail or the press. Our work can be done quite effectively without the aid of these agencies. We can send messages from mouth to mouth with electric speed. The railway train quickly transfers leaders from place to place, but it quickly transfers thousands of curiosity-mongers who serve no purpose and cause national waste. I can contemplate with perfect calmness the prohibition of the use of the rail by all except those who sign the creed of co-operation with the Government — we should have an automatic census of co-operators. So long as we have pen and paper, or even slate and pencil, we need not despair of transmitting our thoughts in writing, if we have enough volunteers. I have often been told that the independence of our printing press is a great desideratum. I admit that it is a convenience but I was able to show during the *satyagraha* week in the April of 1919 that it was possible to issue a written newspaper. Given a sufficient number of volunteer writers, we can multiply copies indefinitely. I can foresee many advantages in non-co-operationists being confined to their pens only. — *YI*, 9-3-21, 73.

The Task of Leadership

519. A *satyagraha* struggle is impossible without capital in the shape of character. — *SA*, 218.

520. The leaders of every clean movement are bound to see that they admit only clean fighters to it. — *SA*, 218.

521. Those who claim to lead the masses must resolutely refuse to be led by them, if we want to avoid mob law and desire ordered progress for the country. I believe that mere protestation of one's opinion and surrender to the mass opinion is not only not enough, but in matters of vital importance, leaders must *act* contrary to the mass of opinion if it does not commend itself to their reason. — *YI*,.

522. A leader is useless when he acts against the prompting of his own conscience, surrounded as he must

be by people holding all kinds of views. He will drift like an anchorless ship, if he has not the inner voice to hold him firm and guide him. — *YI*, 23-2-22, 112.

523. An able general always gives battle in his own time on the ground of his choice. He always retains the initiative in these respects and never allows it to pass into the hands of the enemy.

In a *satyagraha* campaign the mode of fight and the choice of tactics, e.g. whether to advance or retreat, offer civil resistance or organize non-violent strength through constructive work and purely selfless humanitarian service are determined according to the exigencies of the situation. A *satyagrahi* must carry out whatever plan is laid out for him with a cool determination giving way to neither excitement nor depression. — *H*, 27-5-39, 143.

524. A wise general does not wait till he is actually routed; he withdraws in time in an orderly manner from a position which he knows he would not be able to hold. —*H*, 22-10-38, 304.

Fighting without a Captain

525. The questioners betray their unbelief in, if not their unfitness for, Swaraj by putting the question. What will happen when all the leaders die ? Our fitness for Swaraj can only be demonstrated by our capacity to continue our work in spite of the withdrawal of leaders by death or imprisonment. Surely the memory of imprisonment should act as a spur to greater and more disciplined action. We must be able to stand on our own legs without support even as we breathe naturally and without artificial aid. — *YI*, 20-10-21, 330.

526. There should be no demoralization when the leaders are gone, and there should be no surrender in the face of fire. — *YI*, 3-11-21, 349.

527. Strength of numbers is the delight of the timid. The valiant of spirit glory in fighting alone. And you are all here to cultivate that valour of the spirit. Be you one or many, this valour is the only valour, all else is false. And the valour of the spirit cannot be achieved without Sacrifice, Determination, Faith and Humility. — *YI*, 17-6-26, 217.

528. Discipline has a place in non-violent strategy, but much more is required. In a *satyagraha* army everybody is a soldier and a servant. But at a pinch every *satyagrahi* soldier has also to be his own general and leader. Mere discipline cannot make for leadership. The latter calls for faith and vision. —*H*, 28-7-40, 227.

529. Where self-reliance is the order of the day, where no one has to look expectantly at another, where there are no leaders and no followers, or where all are leaders and all are followers, the death of a fighter, however eminent, makes not for slackness but on the other hand intensifies the struggle. —*SA*, 288.

530. My confidence is unshaken. If a single *satyagrahi* holds out to the end, victory is absolutely certain. —*SA*, 5.

The Campaign of Satyagraha

531. Having fixed one's minimum from which one may not recede, one may stoop to conquer the whole world. — *YI*, 2-4-25, 115.

532. In a pure fight, the fighters would never go beyond the objective when the fight began even if they received an accession to their strength in course of the fighting and, on the other hand, they could not give up their objective if they found their strength dwindling away. —*SA*, 412.

533. It is my conviction that we are in sight of the promised land, but the danger is the greatest when victory seems the nearest. No victory worth the name has ever been won without a final effort, more serious than all the preceding ones. God's last test is ever the most difficult. Satan's last temptation is ever the most seductive. We must stand God's last test and resist Satan's last temptation, if we would be free.

Non-violence is the most vital and integral part of non-co-operation. We may fail in everything else and still continue our battle if we remain non-violent. But we capitulate miserably if we fail in adhering to non-violence. Let it be remembered that violence is the keystone of the Government edifice. Since violence is its sheet-anchor and its final refuge, it has rendered itself almost immune from

violence on our side by having prepared itself to frustrate all violent effort by the people. We therefore co-operate with the Government in the most active manner when we resort to violence. Any violence on our part must be a token of our stupidity, ignorance and impotent rage. To exercise restraint under the gravest provocation is the truest mark of soldiership. The veriest tyro in the art of war knows, that he must avoid the ambushes of his adversary. And every provocation is a dangerous ambush into which we must resolutely refuse to walk. — *YI*, 28-7-21, 237.

Five Stages of a Movement

534. Every good movement passes through five stages, indifference, ridicule, abuse, repression, and respect. We had indifference for a few months. Then the Viceroy graciously laughed at it. Abuse, including misrepresentation, has been the order of the day. The Provincial Governors and the anti-non-co-operation Press have heaped as much abuse upon the Movement as they have been able to. Now comes repression, at present yet in its fairly mild form. Every movement that survives repression, mild or severe, invariably commands respect which is another name for success. This repression, if we are true, may be treated as a sure sign of the approaching victory. But, if we are true, we shall neither be cowed down nor angrily retaliate and be violent. *Violence is suicide.* Let us recognize that power dies hard, and that it is but natural for the Government to make a final effort for life even though it be through repression. Complete self-restraint at the present critical moment is the speediest way to success. — *YI*, 9-3-21, 74.

A Warning to Satyagrahis

535. Indiscriminate resistance to authority must lead to lawlessness, unbridled licence and consequent self-destruction. — *YI*, 2-4-31, 58.

536. Non-co-operation, when its limitations are not recognized, becomes a licence instead of being a duty and therefore becomes a crime. — *YI*, 29-12-21, 434.

537. Some students have revived the ancient form of barbarity in the form of 'sitting *dhurna*'. I call it 'barbarity'

for it is a crude way of using coercion. It is also cowardly because one who sits '*dhurna*' knows that he is not going to be trampled over. It is difficult to call the practice violence, but it is certainly worse. If we fight our opponent, we at least enable him to return the blow. But when we challenge him to walk over us, we, *knowing* that he will not, place him in a most awkward and humiliating position. I know that the overzealous students who sat *dhurna* never thought of the barbarity of the deed. But one, who is expected to follow the voice of conscience and stand even single-handed in the face of odds, cannot afford to be thoughtless. Non-co-operation, if it fails, will fail only through internal weakness. There is no such thing as defeat in non-co-operation. It never fails. Its so-called representatives may so badly represent their cause that it may appear to the spectators to have failed. Let non-co-operationists therefore beware of everything they do. There must be no impatience, no barbarity, no insolence, no undue pressure. If we want to cultivate a true spirit of democracy, we cannot afford to be intolerant. Intolerance betrays want of faith in one's cause. — *YI*, 2-2-21, 33.

In the midst of Violence

538. A call may come which one dare not neglect, cost what it may. I can clearly see the time coming to me when I *must* refuse obedience to every single State-made law, even though there may be a certainty of bloodshed. When neglect of the call means a denial of God, civil disobedience becomes a peremptory duty. — *YI*, 4-8-21, 244.

539. Is it not intelligible why, notwithstanding its undoubted risks, I am planning some sort of civil disobedience so as to get together all the non-violent forces and see if it stems the tide of onrushing violence? Hatred and ill-will there undoubtedly are in the air. They are bound sooner or later to burst into acts of fury if they are not anticipated in time. The conviction has deepened in me that civil disobedience alone can stop the bursting of that fury. The nation wants to feel its power more even than to have independence. Possession of such power *is* independence.

That civil disobedience may resolve itself into violent disobedience is, I am sorry to have to confess, not an unlikely event. But I know that it will not be the cause of it. Violence is there already corroding the whole body politic. Civil disobedience will be but a purifying process and may bring to the surface what is burrowing under and into the whole body. And British officials, if they choose, may regulate civil disobedience so as to sterilize the forces of violence. But whether they do so, or whether, as many of us fear, they will, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, provoke violence, my course is clear. With the evidence I have of the condition of the country and with the unquenchable faith I have in the method of civil resistance, I must not be deterred from the course the Inward Voice seems to be leading me to. — *YI*, 23-1-30, 29.

540. We must cease to dread violence, if we will have the country free. Can we not see that we are tightly pressed in the coil of violence? The peace we seem to prize is a mere makeshift, and it is bought with the blood of the starving millions. If the critics could only realize the torture of their slow and lingering death brought about by forced starvation, they would risk anarchy and worse in order to end that agony. The agony will not end till the existing rule of spoliation has ended. — *YI*, 23-1-30, 28.

541. There is certainly danger of the Movement becoming violent. But we may no more drop non-violent non-co-operation because of its dangers than we may stop freedom because of the dangers of its abuse. — *YI*, 15-12-20, *Tagore*, 334.

542. But non-violence has to be patient. The Government will spread out its red paws in what it will call self-defence; the party of violence may commit the mistake of seeing its chance of coming out in the open. The non-violent party must then prove its creed by being ground to powder between the two millstones. — *YI*, 6-2-30, 44.

543. If I can have nothing to do with the organized violence of the Government, I can have less to do with the unorganized violence of the people. I would prefer to be crushed between the two. — *YI*, 24-11-21, 382.

Why there Was Suspension after Chauri Chaura

544. So long as the organizers strictly keep within the limits which they have prescribed for themselves there is no cause for calling off *satyagraha*. The friend cites Chauri Chaura as an illustration. In doing so, he has betrayed confusion of thought or ignorance of facts. The Bardoli *Satyagraha* was suspended because Congress and Khilafat men were implicated in the Chauri Chaura outrage. — *YI*, 19-6-24, 201.

545. Whenever I have suspended civil disobedience, I have done so, not by reason of any outbreak of violence, but upon the discovery of such violence as had been initiated or encouraged by Congressmen who should have known better. Any outbreak of violence would not have brought about suspension, for instance, the Moplah outbreak. But Chauri Chaura did, for the simple reason that persons connected with the Congress were involved in it. — *YI*, 29-10-25, 368.

The Spirit of Self-surrender in Satyagraha

546. That is the beauty of *satyagraha*. It comes up to oneself, one has not to go out in search for it. That is a virtue inherent in the principle itself. A *dharma-yuddha*, in which there are no secrets to be guarded, no scope for cunning and no place for untruth, comes unsought; and a man of religion is ever ready for it. A struggle which has to be previously planned is not a righteous struggle. In a righteous struggle God Himself plans campaigns and conducts battles. A *dharma-yuddha* can be waged only in the name of God, and it is only when the *satyagrahi* feels quite helpless, is apparently on his last legs and finds utter darkness all around him, that God comes to the rescue. God helps when one feels oneself humbler than the very dust under one's feet. Only to the weak and helpless is divine succour vouchsafed. — *SA*, 5.

XIV

THE LIFE OF THE SATYAGRAHI

547. You will have to take up sackcloth and ashes. You cannot serve God and Mammon both. —*Ceylon*, 65.

A Life of Truth

548. A man is but the product of his thoughts ; what he thinks, he becomes. —*ER*, 60.

549. Every one of you should, from this very moment, consider yourself a free man or woman and even act as if you are free and no longer under the heel of this Imperialism. This is no make-believe. You have to cultivate the spirit of freedom before it comes physically. The chains of a slave are broken the moment he considers himself a free man. He will then tell his master : 'I have been your slave all these days but I am no longer that now. You may kill me, but if you do not and if you release me from the bondage, I will ask for nothing more from you. For henceforth instead of depending upon you I shall depend upon God for food and clothing. God has given me the urge for freedom and therefore I deem myself to be a free man.' — *GC*, 83.

On Faith and Activity

550. You should be pioneers in presenting a living faith to the world, and not the dry bones of a traditional faith which the world will not grasp. — *Ceylon*, 112.

551. Every moment of our life should be filled with mental or physical activity, but that activity should be *sattvika*, tending to Truth. One, who has consecrated his life to service, cannot lie idle for a single moment. But one has to learn to distinguish between good activity and evil activity. This discrimination goes naturally with a single-minded devotion to service. — *YM*, 39.

552. I have not the shadow of a doubt that any man or woman can achieve what I have, if he or she would make the same effort and cultivate the same hope and faith. Work without faith is like an attempt to reach the bottom of a bottomless pit. — *H*, 3-10-36, 269.

553. Faith can only grow from within; it cannot be acquired vicariously. Nothing great in this world was ever accomplished without a living faith. — *H*, 9-10-37, 292.

554. Faith can be developed. Only, the way it can be developed and in which it works differs from that in the case of violence. You cannot develop violence through prayer. Faith, on the other hand, cannot be developed except through prayer. Non-violence succeeds only when we have a living faith in God. — *H*, 28-1-39, 443.

555. It is poor faith that needs fair weather for standing firm. That alone is true faith that stands the foulest weather. — *YI*, 20-11-24, 383.

556. In every great cause it is not the number of fighters that counts but it is the quality of which they are made that becomes the deciding factor. The greatest men of the world have always stood alone. Take the great prophets, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed — they all stood alone like many others whom I can name. But they had living faith in themselves and their God, and believing as they did that God was on their side, they never felt lonely. — *YI*, 10-10-29, 330.

557. Meetings and group organizations are all right. They are of some help, but very little. They are like the scaffolding that an architect erects — a temporary and makeshift expedient. The thing that really matters is an invincible faith that cannot be quenched. — *H*, 28-1-39, 443.

Thoroughness

558. No matter how insignificant the thing you have to do, do it as well as you can, give it as much of your care and attention as you would give to the thing you regard as most important. For it will be by those small things that you shall be judged. — *H*, 27-7-35, 191.

559. In every branch of reform constant study giving one a mastery over one's subject is necessary. Ignorance is at the root of failures, partial or complete, of all reform movements whose merits are admitted. For every project masquerading under the name of reform is not necessarily worthy of being so designated. — *H*, 24-4-37, 84.

Punctuality and Order

560. I have often expressed the opinion among friends that in the matter of capacity for detachment, Englishmen are far in advance of us. No matter how important national affairs may be, they will keep their meal hours and hours of recreation. They are not unnerved in the face of dangers or impending calamity. This may be called working in the spirit of the Gita. Among the political workers in India there are very few who come up to the Englishman's standard.

This English detachment is worthy of emulation. That it is used for the exploitation of the so-called uncivilized or semi-civilized races of the earth is another matter. It would be a distinct gain to the national cause if the leaders and workers strictly keep their hours. No man is expected to do more than he really can. If at the end of the day there is surplus work left or he cannot get through it without missing a meal or encroaching upon the hours of sleep or recreation, there is mismanagement somewhere. I have no doubt that if we cultivate the habit of punctuality and acting according to programme, the index of national efficiency will go up, our advance towards our goal will be rapid, and the workers will be healthier and longer lived. — *H*, 24-9-38, 266.

Fearlessness

561. We often confuse spiritual knowledge with spiritual attainment. Spirituality is not a matter of knowing scriptures and engaging in philosophical discussions. It is a matter of heart culture, of unmeasurable strength. Fearlessness is the first requisite of spirituality. Cowards can never be moral. — *YI*, 13-10-21, 323.

562. Fearlessness is indispensable for the growth of the other noble qualities. How can one seek Truth, or cherish Love, without fearlessness? As Pritam says, 'The path of Hari (the Lord) is the path of the brave, not of cowards.' Hari here means Truth, and the brave are those armed with fearlessness. — *YM*, 40.

563. The remedy against cowardice is not physical culture but the braving of dangers. So long as parents of the

middle class Hindus, themselves timid, continue to transmit their timidity by keeping their grown-up children in cotton-wool, so long will there be the desire to shun dangers and run no risks. They will have to dare to leave their children alone, let them run risks and even at times get killed in so doing. The puniest individual may have a stout heart. — *YI*, 29-5-24, 177.

564. Swaraj won without sacrifice cannot last long. I would therefore like our people to get ready to make the highest sacrifice that they are capable of. In true sacrifice all the suffering is on one side — one is required to master the art of getting killed without killing, of gaining life by losing it. May India live up to this *mantra* ! — *YI*, 8-5-30, 161.

565. They must be ready to face bullets without flinching but also without lifting their little finger in so-called self-defence. A *satyagrahi* abjures the right of self-defence. — *H*, 9-7-38, 173.

566. Nothing better can happen to a *satyagrahi* than meeting death all unsought in the very act of *satyagraha*, i. e. pursuing Truth. — *SA*, 288.

567. Let us all be brave enough to die the death of a martyr, but let no one lust for martyrdom. — *YI*, 13-1-27, 10.

568. We are not to seek imprisonment out of bravado. The gaol is the gateway to liberty and honour, when innocence finds itself in it. — *YI*, 1-6-21, 171.

Humility

569. A non-co-operator is nothing if he is not humble. When self-satisfaction creeps over a man, he has ceased to grow and therefore has become unfit for freedom. He who offers a little sacrifice from a lowly and religious spirit quickly realizes the littleness of it. Once on the path of sacrifice, we find out the measure of our selfishness and must continually wish to give more and not be satisfied till there is a complete self-surrender. — *YI*, 29-9-21, 306.

570. The *satyagrahi's* course is plain. He must stand unmoved in the midst of all cross currents. He may not be impatient with blind orthodoxy, nor be irritated over the

unbelief of the suppressed people. He must know that his suffering will melt the stoniest heart of the stoniest fanatic and that it will also be a wall of protection of the wavering *Panchama* brother who has been held under suppression for ages. He must know that relief will come when there is least hope for it. For such is the way of the cruelly-kind Deity who insists upon testing His devotee through a fiery furnace and delights in humbling him to the dust. — *YI*, 4-6-25, 189.

571. If patience is worth anything, it must endure to the end of time. And a living faith will last in the midst of the blackest storm.— *YI*, 17-6-26, 215.

572. It is the duty of him who claims to serve humanity not to be angry with those whom he is serving. — *YI*, 2-4-31, 54.

573. It is of little moment when the goal is reached so long as effort is not relaxed. — *GC*, 74.

The Practice of an Ideal

574. We need not be afraid of ideals or of reducing them to practice even to the uttermost. — *Nat*, 355.

575. We shall never achieve (our object) unless new facts are *made* to suit the principle, instead of performing the impossible feat of changing the principle to suit existing facts. — *YI*, 26-1-22, 62.

576. No one need take fright at my observations, or give up the effort in despair. The taking of a vow does not mean that we are able to observe it completely from the very beginning; it does mean constant and honest effort in thought, word and deed with a view to its fulfilment. We must not practise self-deception by resorting to some make-believe. — *YM*, 25.

577. Having ascertained the law of our being, we must set about reducing it to practice to the extent of our capacity and no further. That is the middle way. — *YI*, 5-2-25, 48.

578. Striving does not require any quality unattainable by the lowliest among us. For satyagraha *is an attribute of the spirit within. It is latent in everyone of us.* — *YI*, 26-12-24, 429.

Quality and Not Quantity

579. The best and the most solid work was done in the wilderness of minority. — *YI*, 2-3-22, 135.

580. Strength of numbers is the delight of the timid. The valiant in spirit glory in fighting alone. And you are all here to cultivate that valour of the spirit. Be you one or many, this valour is the only valour, all else is false. — *YI*, 17-6-26, 217.

What is True Victory?

581. For a fighter, the fight itself is victory for he takes delight in it alone. — *SA*, 394.

582. A *satyagrahi*, whether free or incarcerated is ever victorious. He is vanquished only when he forsakes truth and non-violence and thus turns a deaf ear to the Inner Voice. If, therefore, there is such a thing as defeat for even a *satyagrahi*, he alone is the cause of it.

583. Joy lies in the fight, in the attempt, in the suffering involved, not in the victory itself. For, victory is implied in such an attempt. — *H*, 23-12-39, 386.

True Strength is Inward

584. I believe that I have an unflinching faith in God. For many years I have accorded intellectual assent to the proposition that death is only a big change in life and nothing more, and should be welcome whenever it arrives. I have deliberately made a supreme attempt to cast out from my heart all fear whatsoever including the fear of death. Still I remember occasions in my life when I have not rejoiced at the thought of approaching death as one might rejoice at the prospect of meeting a long lost friend. Thus man often remains weak notwithstanding all his efforts to be strong, and knowledge which stops at the head and does not penetrate into the heart is of but little use in the critical times of living experience. Then again the strength of the spirit within mostly evaporates when a man gets and accepts support from outside. A *satyagrahi* must be always on his guard against such temptations. — *SA*, 286.

Recognize Your own Limitations

585. I am conscious of my own limitations. That consciousness is my only strength. Whatever I might have been able to do in my life has proceeded more than anything else out of the realization of my own limitations. — *YI*, 13-11-24, 378.

586. There are many things to do. Let each one of us choose our task and stick to it through thick and thin. Let us not think of the vastness. But let us pick up that portion which we can handle best. — *YI*, 11-9-24, 298.

Know Thyself

587. Our difficulties are of two kinds: those that are imposed from without and those that are of our own creation. The latter are far more dangerous, because we often hug them and are therefore reluctant to remove them. *YI*, 10-11-20, *Tagore*, 752.

588. A knowledge of one as he is can always do good to the people, never any harm. — *YI*, 25-2-26, 78.

589. Confession of error is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner than before. It is million times better to *appear* untrue before the world than to *be* untrue to ourselves. — *YI*, 16-2-22, 102, 103.

Taking the Blame

590. There is no discredit greater than the refusal to acknowledge errors. — *H*, 8-10-38, 279.

591. It is well to take the blame sometimes. — *Nat*, 326.

592. I am used to misrepresentation all my life. It is the lot of every public worker. He has to have a tough hide. Life would be burdensome if every misrepresentation has to be answered and cleared. It is a rule of life with me never to explain misrepresentations except when the cause required correction. This rule has saved much time and worry. — *YI*, 27-5-26, 193.

Self-restraint

593. Self-restraint never accrues to the faint-hearted. It is the beautiful fruit of watchfulness and ceaseless effort *in the form of prayer and fasting.* — *H*, 10-4-37, 68.

594. Everyone must remember that his most secret thoughts have an influence on himself as well as on others. He should, therefore, practise self-control, so as to put all evil thoughts out of his mind, and give room only for thoughts that are noble and great. He should keep his body as clean and spotless as his mind. —*ER*, 59.

595. Inhibitions imposed from without rarely succeed, but when they are self-imposed they have a decidedly salutary effect. —*Auto*, 398.

Rules of Self-restraint

(A) WITH REGARD TO FOOD

596. For the seeker who would live in fear of God, and who would see Him face to face, restraint in diet both as to quantity and quality is as essential as restraint in thought and speech. —*Auto*, 334.

597. One should eat not in order to please the palate but just to keep the body going. When each organ or sense subserves the body and through the body the soul, its specific relish disappears, and then alone does it begin to function in the way nature intended it to do.

Any number of experiments is too small and no sacrifice is too great for attaining this symphony with nature. —*Auto*, 392.

(B) FASTING

598. It is my firm belief that the strength of the soul grows in proportion as you subdue the flesh. — *YI*, 23-10-24, 354.

599. My religion teaches me that whenever there is distress which one cannot remove, one must fast and pray. —*YI*, 25-9-24, 319.

(C) CONTINENCE

600. It is wrong to call me an ascetic. The ideals that regulate my life are presented for acceptance by mankind in general. I have arrived at them by gradual evolution. Every step was thought out, well-considered, and taken with the greatest deliberation. Both my continence and non-violence were derived from personal experience and became necessary in response to the calls of public duty.

The isolated life I had to lead in South Africa whether as a householder, legal practitioner, social reformer or politician, required, for the due fulfilment of these duties, the strictest regulation of sexual life and a rigid practice of non-violence and truth in human relations, whether with my own countrymen or with the Europeans. I claim to be no more than an average man with less than average ability. Nor can I claim any special merit for such non-violence or continence as I have been able to reach with laborious research. I have not the shadow of a doubt that any man or woman can achieve what I have, if he or she would make the same effort and cultivate the same hope and faith. —*H*, 3-10-36, 268.

601. He who has realized the misery of mankind in all its magnitude will never be stirred by passion. — *YI*, 29-4-26, 157.

602. Realization of God is impossible without complete renunciation of the sexual desire. — *YI*, 24-6-26, 230.

603. The conquest of lust is the highest endeavour of a man or woman's existence. Without overcoming lust man cannot hope to rule over self. And without rule over self there can be no Swaraj or *Ram Raj*. Rule of all without rule of oneself would prove to be as deceptive and disappointing as a painted toy-mango, charming to look at outwardly but hollow and empty within. No worker who has not overcome lust can hope to render any genuine service to the cause of Harijans, communal unity, Khadi, cow-protection or village reconstruction. Great causes like these cannot be served by intellectual equipment alone, they call for spiritual effort or soul-force. Soul-force comes only through God's grace, and God's grace never descends upon a man who is a slave to lust. —*H*, 21-11-36, 321.

604. Now for the definition — the meaning — of *brahmacharya*. Its root meaning may be given thus: that conduct which puts one in touch with God.

The conduct consists in the fullest control over all the senses. This is the true and relevant meaning of the word.

Popularly it has come to mean mere physical control over the organ of generation. This narrow meaning has

debased *brahmacharya* and made its practice all but impossible. Control over the organ of generation is impossible without proper control over all the senses. They are all interdependent. Mind on the lower plane is included in the senses. Without control over the mind mere physical control, even if it can be attained for a time, is of little or no use. — *H*, 13-6-36, 137.

605. *Brahmacharya* must be observed in thought, word and deed. It may be harmful to suppress the body, if the mind is at the same time allowed to go astray. Where the mind wanders, the body must follow sooner or later.

It is necessary here to appreciate a distinction. It is one thing to allow the mind to harbour impure thoughts; it is a different thing altogether if it strays among them in spite of ourselves. Victory will be ours in the end, if we non-co-operate with the mind in its evil wanderings.

We experience every moment of our lives, that often while the body is subject to our control, the mind is not. This physical control should never be relaxed, and in addition we must put forth a constant endeavour to bring the mind under control. We can do nothing more, nothing less. — *YM*, 18.

606. The mind is even more difficult to curb than the wind. Nevertheless the existence of God within makes even the control of the mind possible. Let no one think that it is impossible because it is difficult. It is the highest goal and it is no wonder that the highest effort should be necessary to attain it. — *Auto*, 259.

607. It is better to enjoy through the body than to be enjoying the thought of it. It is good to disapprove of sensual desires as soon as they arise in the mind and try to keep them down; but if, for want of physical enjoyment, the mind wallows in thoughts of enjoyment, then it is legitimate to satisfy the hunger of the body. About this I have no doubt. — (Translated from the *Hindi Navajivan* of 9-5-29).

(D) NON-POSSESSION

608. It was because this process of multiplication of wants out of proportion to our surroundings was discovered to be going on with increasing velocity that Non-co-operation

was conceived. And thus conceived it was not non-co-operation with persons but with an attitude that was responsible for the system which had seized us in its serpentine coil and which was reducing us to dust. The system had raised the standard of living among us, its creatures, wholly unwarranted by the general condition of the country. And since India did not live upon exploitation of other peoples, the expansion of the middle class who were also the middlemen meant extinction of the lowest strata. Hence the smallest villages were dying out through sheer exhaustion. This was all plain to many of us in 1920. The arresting movement is yet in its infancy. Let us not hinder it by any hasty action.

This artificial increase in our wants has been felt more severely than it otherwise would have been, because of the persistence of the family system which the Western method is ill-designed to support. The joint system having become wooden, its evils have become accentuated, its sweet graces have disappeared. Thus evil has been added to evil.

Our self-sacrifice must therefore be in terms of the requirements of the country. The reforms required are more from within than from without. A perfect constitution super-imposed upon a rotten internal condition will be like a whited sepulchre.

The process of self-purification must therefore be completed. The spirit of self-sacrifice must be extended. Great as the sacrifice has been, it is nothing compared to the demands made upon us by the country. We dare not support able-bodied members of the family — men or women — who will not work. We may not contribute a single pice towards the expenses of conforming to meaningless or superstitious customs, such as caste-dinners, or towards forming expensive marriage connections. Every marriage and every death brings an unnecessary cruel burden upon the head of the family. We must refuse to regard such acts of self-denial as self-sacrifice. They are evils to be counteracted with courage and resolution.

There is too, for us, the inordinately expensive education. When it is difficult for millions even to make

the two ends meet, when millions are dying of starvation, it is monstrous, to think of giving our relatives a costly education. Expansion of the mind will come from hard experience, not necessarily in the college or the school-room. When some of us deny ourselves and ours the so-called higher education, we shall find the true means of giving and receiving a really high education. Is there not, may there not be, a way, of each boy paying for his own education? There may be no such way. Whether there is or there is not such a way is irrelevant. But there is no doubt that when we deny ourselves the way of expensive education, seeing that aspiration after higher education is a laudable end, we shall find out a way of fulfilling it more in accord with our surroundings. The golden rule to apply in all such cases is resolutely to refuse to have what the millions cannot. The ability to refuse will not descend upon us all of a sudden. The first thing is to cultivate the mental attitude that we will not have possessions or facilities denied to millions, and the next immediate thing is to rearrange our lives as fast as possible in accordance with that mentality.

Without a large, very large, army of such self-sacrificing and determined workers, real progress of the masses, I hold to be an impossibility. And without that progress, there is no such thing as Swaraj. Progress towards Swaraj will be in exact proportion to the increase in the number of workers who will dare to sacrifice their all for the cause of the poor. — *YI*, 24-6-26, 226.

609. Whilst Gandhiji insists, as we have seen, on a village worker living on a villager's diet not costing say three annas a day, he is far from insisting on starvation or mortification of the flesh. To a worker who has imposed on himself a strict regimen involving only one meal a day, consisting generally of 15 tolas of rice boiled, *amti* (made of vegetables and *dal*) and buttermilk, all costing only one anna per day, Gandhiji wrote:

'Your meal is very meagre, it is starvation diet. In my opinion, you are not making full use of the instrument that God has put at your disposal. Do you know the story of

the talents that were taken away from him who did not know how to use them, or having known would not use them?

'Mortification of the flesh is a necessity when the flesh rebels against one; it is a sin when the flesh has come under subjection and can be used as an instrument of service. In other words, there is no inherent merit in mortification of the flesh.' —*H*, 2-11-35, 299.

(E) Put a Curb on the Mind

610. We should remember that Non-possession is a principle applicable to thoughts, as well as to things. One, who fills his brain with useless knowledge, violates that inestimable principle. Thoughts, which turn us away from God, or do not turn us towards Him, constitute impediments in our way. — *YM*, 38.

611. Silence is part of the spiritual discipline of the votary of truth. Proneness to exaggerate, to suppress or modify the truth, willingly or unwillingly, is a natural weakness of man, and silence is necessary in order to surmount it. A man of few words will rarely be thoughtless in his speech; he will measure every word. — *Auto*, 84.

Renunciation and Joy

612. No sacrifice is worth the name unless it is a joy. Sacrifice and a long face go ill together. Sacrifice is 'making sacred.' He must be a poor specimen of humanity who is in need of sympathy for his sacrifice. — *YI*, 25-6-25, 217.

613. Forced sacrifice is no sacrifice. It will not last. — *YI*, 11-8-20, *Tagore*, 410.

614. There should be no sorrow felt over one's sacrifice. That sacrifice which causes pain, loses its sacred character and will break down under stress. One gives up things that one considers to be injurious and therefore there should be pleasure attendant upon giving up. — *YI*, 15-7-26, 252.

Nature of True Restraint

615. Gandhiji's favourite quotation from the sage Nishkulananda: 'Renunciation of objects, without the renunciation of desires, is shortlived, however hard you may try.' — *Auto*, 20.

616. I know that the mental attitude is everything. Just as prayer may be merely a mechanical intonation as of a bird, so may a fast be a mere mechanical torture of the flesh. Neither will touch the soul within. — *YI*, 16-2-22, 103.

617. Abstemiousness from intoxicating drinks and drugs, and from all kinds of foods, especially meat, is undoubtedly a great aid to the evolution of the spirit, but it is by no means an end in itself. Many a man eating meat and with everybody but living in the fear of God is nearer his freedom than a man religiously abstaining from meat and many other things, but blaspheming God in every one of his acts. — *YI*, 6-10-21, 318.

618. I do feel that spiritual progress does demand at some stage that we should cease to kill our fellow creatures for the satisfaction of our bodily wants. The beautiful lines of Goldsmith occur to me as I tell you of my vegetarian fad :

No flocks that range the valley free
To slaughter I condemn,
Taught by the Power that pities me
I learn to pity them. —*IC*, 402.

619. Experience teaches that animal food is unsuited to those who would curb their passions. But it is wrong to overestimate the importance of food in the formation of character or in subjugating the flesh. Diet is a powerful factor not to be neglected. But to sum up all religion in terms of diet, as is often done in India, is as wrong as it is to disregard all restraint in regard to diet and to give full reins to one's appetite. — *YI*, 7-10-26, 347.

620. By unnecessarily exercising ourselves over conundrums about the justifiability of man's killing creatures and animals of a lower order we often seem to forget our primary duties. Every one of us is not faced every day with the question of killing obnoxious animals. Most of us have not developed courage and love enough to practise *ahimsa* with regard to dangerous reptiles. We do not destroy the vipers of ill-will and anger in our bosom, but we dare to raise futile discussions about the propriety of killing obnoxious creatures and we thus move in a vicious circle. We fail in the primary duty and lay the unction to our souls

that we are refraining from killing obnoxious life. One who desires to practise *ahimsa* must for the time being forget all about snakes etc. Let him not worry if he cannot avoid killing them, but try for all he is worth to overcome the anger and ill-will of men by his patient endeavour as a first step towards cultivating universal love.

Abjure brinjals or potatoes by all means, if you will, but do not for heaven's sake begin to feel yourself self-righteous and flatter yourself that you are practising *ahimsa* on that account. The very idea is enough to make one blush. *Ahimsa* is not a mere matter of dietetics, it transcends it. What a man eats or drinks matters little; it is the self-denial, the self-restraint behind it that matters. By all means practise as much restraint in the choice of the articles of your diet as you like. The restraint is commendable, even necessary, but it touches only the fringe of *ahimsa.* A man may allow himself a wide latitude in the matter of diet and yet may be a personification of *ahimsa* and compel our homage, if his heart overflows with love and melts at another's woe, and has been purged of all passions. On the other hand, a man always over-scrupulous in diet is an utter stranger to *ahimsa* and a pitiful wretch if he is slave to selfishness and passions and is hard of heart. — *YI*, 6-9-28, 300.

XV

RELIGION AND MORALS

True Religion

621. There is no religion higher than Truth and Righteousness. —*ER*, 49.

622. Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is not the Hindu religion which I certainly prize above all other religions, but the *religion* which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and which ever purifies. It is the permanent element in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression and which leaves the soul utterly restless until it has found itself, known its Maker and appreciated the true correspondence between the Maker and itself. — *YI*, 12-5-20, *Tagore*, 1070.

Religion and Morality

623. True religion and true morality are inseparably bound up with each other. Religion is to morality what water is to the seed that is sown in the soil. —*ER*, 49.

624. I reject any religious doctrine that does not appeal to reason and is in conflict with morality. I tolerate unreasonable religious sentiment when it is not immoral. — *YI*, 21-7-20, *Tagore*, 173.

625. As soon as we lose the moral basis, we cease to be religious. There is no such thing as religion overriding morality. Man for instance cannot be untruthful, cruel and incontinent and claim to have God on his side. — *YI*, 24-11-21, 385.

626. Our desires and motives may be divided into two classes—selfish and unselfish. All selfish desires are immoral, while the desire to improve ourselves for the sake of doing good to others is truly moral. The highest moral law is that we should unremittingly work for the good of mankind. — *ER*, 36.

Religion and Practical Affairs

627. Swaraj is synonymous with *Ram Raj*—the establishment of the Kingdom of Righteousness on earth. — *YI*, 4-5-21, 143.

628. Religion which takes no account of practical affairs and does not help to solve them, is no religion. And that is why I am putting a religious matter before you in a practical form. — *YI*, 7-5-25, 164.

629. If any action of mine claimed to be spiritual is proved to be unpractical it must be pronounced to be a failure. I do believe that the most spiritual act is the most practical in the true sense of the term. — *H*, 1-7-39, 181.

630. *Q*. In your autobiography you have said that you cannot think of politics apart from religion. Do you still hold that view? If so, how is it that in a country of many diverse religions like India you expect a common political policy to be adopted?

A. Yes, I still hold the view that I cannot conceive politics as divorced from religion. Indeed religion should pervade every one of our actions. Here religion does not mean sectarianism. It means a belief in ordered moral government of the universe. It is not less real because it is unseen. This religion transcends Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, etc. It does not supersede them. It harmonizes them and gives them reality. — *H*, 10-2-40, 445.

631. To practise non-violence in mundane matters is to know its true value. It is to bring heaven upon earth. There is no such thing as the other world. All worlds are one. There is no 'here' and no 'there'. As Jeans has demonstrated, the whole universe including the most distant stars, invisible even through the most powerful telescope in the world, is compressed in an atom. I hold it therefore to be wrong to limit the use of non-violence to cave-dwellers and for acquiring merit for a favoured position in the other world. All virtue ceases to have use if it serves no purpose in every walk of life. — *H*, 26-7-42, 248.

The Various Religious Creeds

632. Religions are different roads converging to the same point. What does it matter that we take different roads, so long as we reach the same goal? In reality, there are as many religions as there are individuals.—*IHR*, 24, 23.

633. If a man reaches the heart of his own religion, he has reached the heart of the others too. — *Polak*, 41.

634. So long as there are different religions, every one of them may need some distinctive symbol. But when the symbol is made into a fetish and an instrument of proving the superiority of one's religion over other's, it is fit only to be discarded. — *Auto*, 480.

Tolerance

635. I do not like the word tolerance, but could not think of a better one. Tolerance may imply a gratuitous assumption of the inferiority of other faiths to one's own, whereas *ahimsa* teaches us to entertain the same respect for the religious faiths of others as we accord to our own, thus admitting the imperfection of the latter. This admission will be readily made by a seeker of Truth, who follows the law of Love. If we had attained the full vision of Truth, we would no longer be mere seekers, but have become one with God, for Truth is God. But being only seekers, we prosecute our quest, and are conscious of our imperfection. And if we are imperfect ourselves, religion as conceived by us must also be imperfect. We have not realized religion in its perfection, even as we have not realized God. Religion of our conception, being thus imperfect, is always subject to a process of evolution and re-interpretation. Progress towards Truth, towards God, is possible only because of such evolution. And if all faiths outlined by men are imperfect, the question of comparative merit does not arise. All faiths constitute a revelation of Truth, but all are imperfect, and liable to error. Reverence for other faiths need not blind us to their faults. We must be keenly alive to the defects of our own faith also, yet not leave it on that account, but try to overcome those defects. Looking at all religions with an equal eye, we would not only not hesitate, but would think it our duty, to blend into our faith every acceptable feature of other faiths.

Even as a tree has a single trunk, but many branches and leaves, so there is one true and perfect Religion, but it becomes many, as it passes through the human medium.

The one Religion is beyond all speech. Imperfect men put it into such language as they can command, and their words are interpreted by other men equally imperfect. Whose interpretation is to be held to be the right one? Everybody is right from his own standpoint, but it is not possible that everybody is wrong. Hence the necessity of tolerance, which does not mean indifference to one's own faith, but a more intelligent and purer love for it. Tolerance gives us spiritual insight, which is as far from fanaticism as the north pole from the south. True knowledge of religion breaks down the barriers between faith and faith. — *YM*, 55.

636. There is one rule, however, which should always be kept in mind while studying all great religions and that is that one should study them only through the writings of known votaries of the respective religions. For instance, if one wants to study the *Bhagavata*, one should do so not through a translation of it made by a hostile critic but one prepared by a lover of the *Bhagavata*. Similarly to study the Bible one should study it through the commentaries of devoted Christians. This study of other religions besides one's own will give one a grasp of the rock-bottom unity of all religions and afford a glimpse also of the universal and absolute truth which lies beyond the 'dust of creeds and faiths'.

Let no one even for a moment entertain the fear that a reverent study of other religions is likely to weaken or shake one's faith in one's own. The Hindu system of philosophy regards all religions as containing the elements of truth in them and enjoins an attitude of respect and reverence towards them all. This of course presupposes regard for one's own religion. Study and appreciation of other religions need not cause a weakening of that regard; it should mean extension of that regard to other religions. — *YI*, 6-12-28, 406.

Gandhi's Personal Attitude

637. After long study and experience, I have come to the conclusion that (1) all religions are true; (2) all religions have some error in them; (3) all religions are almost as

dear to me as my own Hinduism, in as much as all human beings should be as dear to one as one's own close relatives. My own veneration for other faiths is the same as that for my own faith; therefore no thought of conversion is possible. The aim of the Fellowship should be to help a Hindu to become a better Hindu, a Mussalman to become a better Mussalman, and a Christian a better Christian. The attitude of patronizing toleration is false to the spirit of International Fellowship. If I have a suspicion in my mind that my religion is more or less true, and that others' are more or less false, instead of being more or less true, then, though I may have some sort of fellowship with them, it is of an entirely different kind from the one we need in the International Fellowship. Our prayer for other must be NOT 'God, give him the light that Thou hast given me'; BUT 'Give him all the light and truth he needs for his highest development.' Pray merely that your friends may become better men, whatever their form of religion.

Nevertheless, your experience may become a part of their experience, without your knowing it. — *Sabarmati*, 1928, 17-19.

To Christian Friends

638. Your work will be all the richer if you accept as settled fact the faiths of the people you come to serve, — faiths which, however crude, are valuable to them. I want you to complement the faith of the people instead of undermining it. Make us better Hindus, i. e. better men and women. Why should a man, even if he becomes Christian, be torn from his surroundings?

Superstitions and undesirable things go as soon as we begin to live the correct life. I concern myself not with belief but with asking to do the right thing. As soon as they do it, their belief rights itself. — *YI*, 11-8-27, 250, 251.

True Preaching

639. It is better to allow our lives to speak for us than our words. God did not bear the Cross only 1900 years ago, but He bears it today, and He dies and is

resurrected from day to day. It would be poor comfort to the world if it had to depend upon a historical God who died 2000 years ago. Do not then preach the God of history, but show Him as He lives today through you. — *YI*, 11-8-27, 251.

640. God has created different faiths just as He has the votaries thereof. How can I even secretly harbour the thought that my neighbour's faith is inferior to mine and wish that he should give up his faith and embrace mine? As a true and loyal friend, I can only wish and pray that he may live and grow perfect in his own faith. In God's house there are many mansions and they are equally holy. — *H*, 20-4-34, 73.

641. I do not believe in people telling others of their faith, especially with a view to conversion. Faith does not admit of telling. It has to be lived and then it becomes self-propagating. — *YI*, 20-10-27, 352.

642. Even a lofty utterance, that has not the backing of sincerity and experience, will be inert and lifeless, and will utterly fail to penetrate and quicken the hearts of men, while the speech that springs from self-realization and genuine experience is always fruitful. — *H*, 21-11-36, 322.

643. Learning takes us through many stages in life but it fails us utterly in the hour of danger and temptation. Then faith alone saves. — *YI*, 22-1-25, 27.

644. Divine knowledge is not borrowed from books. It has to be realized in oneself. Books are at best an aid, often even a hindrance. — *YI*, 17-7-24, 238.

645. Religion is a very personal matter. We should by living the life according to our lights share the best with one another, thus adding to the sum total of human effort to reach God. — *H*, 28-11-36, 330.

The Acid Test

646. I would reject all authority if it is in conflict with sober reason or the dictates of the heart. Authority sustains and ennobles the weak when it is the handiwork of reason, but it degrades them when it supplants reason sanctified by the still small voice within. — *YI*, 8-12-20, *Tagore*, 616.

647. Scriptures cannot transcend reason and truth. They are intended to purify reason and illuminate truth. — *YI*, 19-1-21, 22.

648. Error can claim no exemption even if it can be supported by the scriptures of the world. — *YI*, 26-2-25, 74.

649. An error does not become truth by reason of multiplied propagation, nor does truth become error because nobody sees it. — *YI*, 26-2-25, 75.

650. I do not hold that everything ancient is good because it is ancient. I do not advocate surrender of God-given reasoning faculty in the face of ancient tradition. Any tradition, however ancient, if inconsistent with morality, is fit to be banished from the land. Untouchability may be considered to be an ancient tradition, the institution of child widowhood and child marriage may be considered to be an ancient tradition, and even so many an ancient horrible belief and superstitious practice. I would sweep them out of existence if I had the power. When, therefore, I talk of respecting the ancient tradition, you now understand what I mean. — *YI*, 22-9-27, 319.

651. We should cease to grow the moment we cease to discriminate between virtue and vice, and slavishly copy the past which we do not fully know. We are proud heirs to all that was noblest and best in the bygone age. We must not dishonour our heritage by multiplying past errors. — *YI*, 15-9-21, 292.

652. Intolerance of criticism even of what one may prize as life itself is not conducive to the growth of public corporate life. — *YI*, 5-3-25, 82.

On Hinduism

653. I can no more describe my feeling for Hinduism than for my wife. She moves me as no other woman in the world can. Not that she has no faults. I dare say she has many more than I see myself. But the feeling of an indissoluble bond is there. Even so I feel about Hinduism with all its faults and limitations. Nothing elates me so much as the music of the *Gita* or the *Ramayana* of Tulsidas, the only two books in Hinduism I may be said

to know. I know the vice that is going on today in all the great Hindu shrines, but I love them in spite of their unspeakable failings. I am a reformer through and through. But my zeal never takes me to the rejection of any of the essential things in Hinduism. — *YI*, 6-10-21, 318.

654. Hinduism is a living organism liable to growth and decay, and subject to the laws of nature. One and indivisible at the root, it has grown into a vast tree with innumerable branches. The changes in the seasons affect it. It has its autumn and summer, its winter and spring. The rains nourish and fructify it too. Hinduism is like the Ganges, pure and unsullied at its source, but taking in its course the impurities in the way. Even like the Ganges it is beneficent in its total effect. — *YI*, 8-4-26, 131.

(A) GURUVADA

655. I believe in the Hindu theory of *guru* and its importance in spiritual realization. I think there is a great deal of truth in the doctrine that true knowledge is impossible without a *guru*. An imperfect teacher in mundane affairs may be tolerable, but not so in spiritual matters. Only a perfect *gnani* (a knowing one, a seer) deserves to be enthroned as *guru*. — *Auto*, 113.

656. I must therefore warn all against accepting imperfect ones as *gurus*. It is better to grope in the dark and wade through a million errors to Truth than to entrust oneself to one who 'knows not that he knows not.' —*YI*, 3-12-25, 422.

(B) IDOL WORSHIP

657. I do not disbelieve in idol worship. An idol does not excite any feeling of veneration in me. But I think that idol worship is part of human nature. We hanker after symbolism. —*YI*, 6-10-21, 318.

(C) INCARNATION

658. In Hinduism, incarnation is ascribed to one who has performed some extraordinary service of mankind. All embodied life is in reality an incarnation of God, but it is not usual to consider every living being as an incarnation. Future generations pay this homage to one who, in his own generation, has been extraordinarily religious in his conduct. I can see nothing wrong in this procedure; it takes nothing

from God's greatness and there is no violence done to truth. There is an Urdu saying which means 'Adam is not God but he is a spark of the Divine.' And therefore he who is the most religiously behaved has most of the divine spark in him. It is in accordance with this train of thought that Krishna enjoys, in Hinduism, the status of the most perfect incarnation. — *YI*, 6-8-31, 205.

(D) Belief in the Hereditary Transmissibility of Character

659. Children inherit the qualities of the parents, no less than their physical features. Environment does play an important part, but the original capital on which a child starts in life is inherited from its ancestors. — *Auto.* 381.

660. I believe that just as every one inherits a particular form so does he inherit the particular characteristics and qualities of his progenitors, and to make this admission is to conserve one's energy. That frank admission, if he will act up to it, would put a legitimate curb upon our ambitions, and thereby our energy is set free for extending the field of spiritual research and spiritual evolution. It is this doctrine of *Varnashrama Dharma* which I have always adopted. — *YI*, 29-9-27, 329.

(E) Varna

661. I regard *Varnashrama* as a healthy division of work based on birth. The present ideas of caste are a perversion of the original. There is no question with me of superiority or inferiority. It is purely a question of duty. I have indeed stated that *varna* is based on birth. But I have also said that it is possible for a *shudra*, for instance, to become a *vaishya*. But in order to perform the *duty* of a *vaishya* he does not need the label of a *vaishya*. He who performs the duty of a *brahman* will easily become one in the next incarnation. — *YI*, 23-4-25, 145.

662. So far as I know anything at all of Hinduism, the meaning of *varna* is incredibly simple. It simply means the following on the part of us all the hereditary calling of our forefathers, in so far as that traditional calling is not inconsistent with fundamental ethics, and this only for the purpose of earning one's livelihood. You will realize that if all of

us follow this law of *varna* we would limit our material ambition, and our energy would be set free for exploring those vast fields whereby and wherethrough we can know God. — *YI*, 20-10-27, 355.

663. *Varnashrama Dharma* defines man's mission on this earth. He is not born day after day to explore avenues for amassing riches and to explore different means of livelihood; on the contrary man is born in order that he may utilize every atom of his energy for the purpose of knowing his Maker. It restricts him therefore, for the purpose of holding body and soul together, to the occupation of his forefathers. That and nothing more or nothing less is *Varnashrama Dharma*. —*YI*, 27-10-27, 357.

664. Numerous verses from the *shastras* unmistakably show that mere birth counts for nothing. A person must show corresponding works and character to establish his claim by birth. Such verses also enforce the argument that

(i) a person loses *varna* by failing to exhibit its peculiar characteristics;

(ii) inter-*varna* marriage or interdining, whatever virtue the restrictions on them may have, does not affect a person's *varna*, at least not so much as the failing to live up to one's *varna*;

(iii) birth, while it gives a start and enables the parents to determine the training and occupation of their children, does not perpetuate the *varna* of one's birth, if it is not fulfilled by works. — *H*, 15-4-33, 2.

(F) Caste as Varna

665. Our existing caste organizations are really trade guilds. — *YI*, 13-4-21, 114.

666. From the economic point of view, its value was once very great. It ensured hereditary skill; it limited competition. It was the best remedy against pauperism. And it had all the advantages of trade guilds. Although it did not foster adventure or invention there, it is not known to have come in the way either.

Historically speaking, caste may be regarded as man's experiment or social adjustment in the laboratory of Indian society. If we can prove it to be a success, it can be offered

to the world as a leaven and as the best remedy against heartless competition and social distintegration born of avarice and greed. — *YI*, 5-1-21, 2.

667. The vast organization of caste answered not only the religious wants of the community but it answered its political needs. The villagers managed their internal affairs through the caste system, and through it they dealt with any oppression from the ruling power or powers. It is not possible to deny of a nation that was capable of producing the caste system its wonderful power of organization. — *Nat*, 339.

668. I believe that every man is born in the world with certain natural tendencies. Every person is born with certain definite limitations which he cannot overcome. From a careful observation of those limitations the law of *varna* was deduced. It establishes certain spheres of action for certain people with certain tendencies. This avoided all unworthy competition. Whilst recognizing limitations the law of *varna* admitted of no distinctions of high and low; on the one hand it guaranteed to each the fruits of his labours and on the other it prevented him from pressing upon his neighbour. This great law has been degraded and fallen into disrepute. But my conviction is that an ideal social order will only be evolved when the implications of this law are fully understood and given effect to.

Q. Do you not think that in ancient India there was much difference in economic status and social privileges between the four *varnas?*

A. That may be historically true. But misapplication or an imperfect understanding of the law must not lead to the ignoring of the law itself. By constant striving we have to enrich the inheritance left to us. This law determines the duties of man. Rights follow from a due performance of duties. — *MR*, 413.

(G) CASTE IN SO FAR AS IT IS DIFFERENT FROM VARNA

669. I consider the four divisions alone to be fundamental, natural, and essential. The innumerable subcastes are sometimes a convenience, often a hindrance. The sooner there is fusion the better. —*YI*, 8-12-20, *Tagore*, 613.

670. The existing innumerable divisions with the attendant artificial restrictions and elaborate ceremonial are harmful to the growth of a religious spirit, as also to the social wellbeing of the Hindus and therefore also their neighbours. — *YI*, 25-2-'26, 77.

671. *Varnashrama* of the *shastras* is today non-existent in practice. The present caste system is the very antithesis of *Varnashrama*. The sooner public opinion abolishes it the better. — *H*, 16-11-35, 316.

672. Caste has nothing to do with religion. It is harmful both to spiritual and national growth. — *H*.

673. Today *brahmanas* and *kshatriyas*, *vaishyas* and *shudras* are mere labels. There is utter confusion of *varna* as I understand it and I wish that all the Hindus will voluntarily call themselves *shudras*. That is the only way to demonstrate the truth of Brahminism and to revive *Varna Dharma* in its true state. — *H*, 25-3-33, 3.

(H) INTERDINING AND INTERMARRIAGE

674. I do not believe that interdining and even intermarriage necessarily deprives a man of his status that his birth has given him. The four divisions define a man's calling, they do not restrict or regulate social intercourse. The divisions define duties, they confer no privileges. All are born to serve God's creation, a *brahmana* with his knowledge, a *kshatriya* with his power of protection, a *vaishya* with his commercial ability and a *shudra* with bodily labour. This however does not mean, that a *brahmana* for instance is absolved from bodily labour, or the duty of protecting himself and others. His birth makes a *brahmana* predominantly a man of knowledge, the fittest by heredity and training to impart it to others. There is nothing, again, to prevent the *shudra* from acquiring all the knowledge he wishes. Only, he will best serve with his body and need not envy others their special qualities for service. *Varnashrama* is self-restraint and conservation and economy of energy.

Though therefore *varnashrama* is not affected by interdining and intermarriage, Hinduism does most emphatically discourage interdining and intermarriage between divisions.

Hinduism is undoubtedly a religion of the renunciation of the flesh so that the spirit may be set free. It is no part of a Hindu's duty to dine with his son. And by restricting his choice of a bride to a particular group, he exercises rare self-restraint. Prohibition against intermarriage and interdining is essential for the rapid evolution of the soul. But this self-denial is no test of *varna*. A *brahmana* may remain a *brahmana*, though he may dine with his *shudra* brother, if he has not left off his duty of service by knowledge. It follows from what I have said above, that restraint in matters of marriage and dining is not based upon notions of superiority. — *YI*, 6-10-21, 317.

675. Correspondents have asked whether interdining and intermarriage are a part of the movement of untouchability. In my opinion they are not. They touch the castemen equally with the outcastes. It is, therefore, not obligatory on an anti-untouchability worker to devote himself or herself to interdining and intermarriage reform. Personally I am of opinion that the reform is coming sooner than we expect. Restriction on intercaste dining and intercaste marriage is no part of Hindu religion. It is a social custom which crept into Hinduism when perhaps it was in its decline, and was then probably meant to be a temporary protection against disintegration of Hindu society. Today those two prohibitions are weakening Hindu society, and the emphasis on them has turned the attention of the mass mind from the fundamentals which alone are vital to life's growth. Wherever, therefore, people voluntarily take part in functions where 'touchables' and 'untouchables', Hindus and non-Hindus are invited to joint dinner parties, I welcome them as a healthy sign. But I should never dream of making this reform, however desirable in itself it may be, part of an all-India reform which is long overdue. Untouchability, in the form we all know it, is a canker eating into the very vitals of Hinduism. Dining and marriage restrictions stunt Hindu society. I think the distinction is fundamental. It would be unwise in a hurricane campaign to overweight and thus endanger the main issue. It may even amount to breach of faith with the masses to call upon them suddenly to view

the removal of untouchability in a light different from what they have been taught to believe it to be. On the one hand, therefore, whilst interdining may go on where the public itself is ready for it, it should not be a part of an India-wide campaign. (Press Statement of 4-11-32) —*My Soul's Agony*, 5.*

676. The question of food and drink has or ought to have no social value. —*YI*, 29-12-20, *Tagore*, 619.

677. In *Varnashrama* there was and there should be no prohibition of intermarriage or interdining.

Though there is in *Varnashrama* no prohibition against intermarriage and interdining, there can be no compulsion. It must be left to the unfettered choice of the individual as to where he or she will marry or dine. If the law of *Varnashrama* was observed there would naturally be a tendency, so far as marriage is concerned, for people to restrict the marital relations to their own *varna*. —*H*, 16-11-35, 316.

678. When I said that removal of untouchability did not include the removal of restrictions on interdining and intermarriage, I had the general Hindu public in mind, not the Congress workers or Congressmen. These have to abolish untouchability from every part of their life. —*H*, 1-2-42, 23.

679. There should be a breach in the double wall of caste and province. If India is one and indivisible, surely there should be no artificial divisions creating innumerable little groups which would neither interdine nor intermarry. There is no religion in this cruel custom. It would not do to plead that individuals cannot make the commencement and

* Regarding the above two passages and their apparent inconsistency, Gandhiji wrote in answer to a correspondent's question:

As I read them with a detached mind, I find no contradiction between the two statements especially if they are read in their full context. I still believe that restriction imposed by oneself upon interdining and intermarriage is an act of renunciation of the flesh. There is one word that perhaps I would change if I was writing the article of 1921 today. Instead of 'prohibition', I should repeat the expression used in the same article just a few lines before and say 'self-imposed restriction against intermarriage and interdining is essential for a rapid evolution of the soul.' —*H*, 29-4-33, 2.

that they must wait till the whole society is ripe for change. No reform has ever been brought about except through intrepid individuals breaking down inhuman customs or usages. And after all what hardships can the schoolmaster suffer if he and his daughters refused to treat marriage as a marketable transaction instead of a status or sacrament, which it undoubtedly is. I would, therefore, advise my correspondent courageously to give up the idea of borrowing or begging and to save the four hundred rupees he can get in his life policy by choosing in consultation with his daughter a suitable husband no matter to what caste or province he belongs. —*H*, 25-7-36, 192.

680. *Q.* Does the Congress programme for the abolition of untouchability include interdining and intermarriage with Harijans ?

A. So far as I know the Congress mind today there is no opposition to dining with Harijans. But speaking for myself, I have said that we have all to become Harijans today or we will not be able to purge ourselves completely of the taint of untouchability. I, therefore, tell all boys and girls who want to marry that they cannot be married at Sevagram Ashram unless one of the parties is a Harijan. I am convinced that there is no real difficulty in this. All that is needed is a change of outlook. —*HS*, 5-1-46.

(I) UNTOUCHABILITY

681. Hinduism has sinned in giving sanction to untouchability. It has degraded us, made us *pariahs*. Even the Mussalmans have caught the sinful contagion from us. —*YI*, 27-4-21, 136.

682. The 'touch-me-not'-ism that disfigures the present-day Hinduism is a morbid growth. It only betrays a woodenness of mind, a blind self-conceit. It is abhorrent alike to the spirit of religion and morality. —*H*, 20-4-34, 73.

683. Untouchability is not only a part and parcel of Hinduism, but a plague, which it is the bounden duty of every Hindu to combat. It has received religious sanction in India, and reduced lakhs and crores of human beings to a state bordering on slavery.

The observance (of the vow of the removal of untouchability) is not fulfilled, merely by making friends with 'untouchables', but by loving all life as one's own self. Removal of untouchability means love for, and service of, the whole world, and it thus merges into *ahimsa.* —*YM*, 47, 49.

684. I do not want to be reborn. But if I have to be reborn, I should be born an untouchable, so that I may share their sorrows, sufferings, and affronts levelled at them, in order that I may endeavour to free myself and them from that miserable condition. I, therefore, pray that if I should be born again, I should do so not as a *brahmana, kshatriya, vaishya,* or *shudra,* but as an *atishudra.* — *YI*, 4-5-21, 144.

(J) Animal Sacrifice

685. It does not matter, that animal sacrifice is alleged to find a place in the *Vedas.* It is enough for us, that such sacrifice cannot stand the fundamental tests of truth and non-violence. I readily admit my incompetence in *Vedic* scholarship. But the incompetence, so far as this subject is concerned, does not worry me, because even if the practice of animal sacrifice be proved to have been a feature of *Vedic* society, it can form no precedent for a votary of *ahimsa.* — *YM*, 77.

(K) Religious Institutions

686. The hoards rotting in the name of religion in the various parts of India have made many of these religious institutions a sham, where they have not become hot-beds of corruption. — *YI*, 6-7-21, 209.

(L) Reinterpretation of Terms

687. As the world progresses the same terms acquire new values. — *YI*, 7-5-25, 161.

688. I have come to feel that like human beings words have their evolution from stage to stage in the contents they hold. For instance the contents of the richest word — God — are not the same to every one of us. They will vary with the experience of each. — *YI*, 11-8-27, 250.

689. *Yagna* is a word full of beauty and power. Hence with the growth of knowledge and experience and with

the change of time, its meaning is likely to grow and change. *Yagna* literally means worship; hence sacrifice; hence any sacrificial act or any act of service. And in this sense every age may and should have its own particular *Yagna.* The principles of religion are one thing, and practices based on them are another. The principles are absolute and irrespective of space and time. Practices change with place and time. — *YI*, 13-5-26, 179.

690. '*Satyam bruyat priyam bruyat ma bruyat satyama-priyam*' :— In my opinion the Sanskrit text means that one should speak the truth in gentle language. One had better not speak it, if one cannot do so in a gentle way; meaning thereby that there is not truth in a man who cannot control his tongue. — *YI*, 17-9-25, 318.

XVI

WOMEN'S PROBLEMS

Women and India's Future

691. I am firmly of opinion that India's salvation depends on the sacrifice and enlightenment of her women. — *H*, 27-6-36, 153.

692. I had flattered myself that my contribution to the women's cause definitely began with the discovery of *satyagraha.* But the writer of the letter is of opinion that the fair sex requires treatment different from men. If it is so, I do not think any man will find the correct solution. No matter how much he tries, he must fail because nature has made him different from woman. Only the toad under the harrow knows where it pinches him. Therefore ultimately woman will have to determine with authority what she needs. My own opinion is that, just as fundamentally man and woman are one, their problem must be one in essence. The soul in both is the same. The two live the same life, have the same feelings. Each is a complement of the other. The one cannot live without the other's active help.

But somehow or other man has dominated woman from ages past, and so woman has developed an inferiority complex. She has believed in the truth of man's interested teaching that she is inferior to him. But the seers among men have recognized her equal status.

Nevertheless there is no doubt that at some point there is bifurcation. Whilst both are fundamentally one, it is also equally true that in the form there is a vital difference between the two. Hence the vocations of the two must also be different. The duty of motherhood, which the vast majority of women will always undertake, requires qualities which man need not possess. She is passive, he is active. She is essentially mistress of the house. He is the bread-winner. She is the keeper and distributor of the bread. She is the care-taker in every sense of the term. The art of bringing up the infants of the race is her special and sole prerogative. Without her care the race must become extinct.

In my opinion it is degrading both for man and woman that woman should be called upon or induced to forsake the hearth and shoulder the rifle for the protection of that hearth. It is a reversion to barbarity and the beginning of the end. In trying to ride the horse that man rides, she brings herself and him down. The sin will be on man's head for tempting or compelling his companion to desert her special calling. There is as much bravery in keeping one's home in good order and condition as there is in defending it against attack from without.

As I have watched millions of peasants in their natural surroundings and as I watch them daily in little Segaon, the natural division of spheres of work has forced itself on my attention. There are no women black-smiths and carpenters. But men and women work on the fields, the heaviest work being done by the males. The women keep and manage the homes. They supplement the meagre resources of the family, but man remains the main bread-winner.

The division of the spheres of work being recognized, the general qualities and culture required are practically the same for both the sexes.

My contribution to the great problem lies in my presenting for acceptance truth and *ahimsa* in every walk of life, whether for individuals or nations. I have hugged the hope that in this woman will be the unquestioned leader and, having thus found her place in human evolution, she will shed her inferiority complex. If she is able to do this successfully, she must resolutely refuse to believe in the modern teaching that everything is determined and regulated by the sex impulse. I fear I have put the proposition rather clumsily. But I hope my meaning is clear. I do not know that the millions of men who are taking an active part in the war are obsessed by the sex spectre. Nor are the peasants working together in their fields worried or dominated by it. This is not to say or suggest that they are free from the instinct implanted in man and woman. But it most certainly does not dominate their lives as it seems to dominate the lives of those who are saturated with the modern sex literature. Neither man nor woman has time for such things when he or she is faced with the hard fact of living life in its grim reality.

I have suggested in these columns that woman is the incarnation of *ahimsa*. *Ahimsa* means infinite love, which again means infinite capacity for suffering. Who but woman, the mother of man, shows this capacity in the largest measure ? She shows it as she carries the infant and feeds it during nine months and derives joy in the suffering involved. What can beat the suffering caused by the pangs of labour ? But she forgets them in the joy of creation. Who again suffers daily so that her babe may wax from day to day ? Let her transfer that love to the whole of humanity, let her forget that she ever was or can be the object of man's lust. And she will occupy her proud position by the side of man as his mother, maker and silent leader. It is given to her to teach the art of peace to the warring world thirsting for that nectar. She can become the leader in *satyagraha* which does not require the learning that books give but does require the stout heart that comes from suffering and faith.

My good nurse in the Sassoon Hospital, Poona, as I was lying on a sick bed years ago, told me the story of a woman who refused to take chloroform because she would not risk the life of the babe she was carrying. She had to undergo a painful operation. The only anaesthetic she had was her love for the babe, to save whom no suffering was too great. Let not women, who can count many such heroines among them, ever despise their sex or deplore that they were not born men. The contemplation of that heroine often makes me envy woman the status that is hers, if she only knew. There is as much reason for man to wish that he was born a woman as for woman to do otherwise. But the wish is fruitless. Let us be happy in the state to which we are born and do the duty for which nature has destined us. — *H*, 24-2-40, 13.

The Problem

693. I passionately desire the utmost freedom for our women. I detest child marriages. I shudder to see a child widow, and shiver with rage when a husband just widowed contracts with brutal indifference another marriage. I deplore the criminal indifference of parents who keep their daughters utterly ignorant and illiterate and bring them up only for the purpose of marrying them off to some young man of means. Notwithstanding all this grief and rage, I realize the difficulty of the problem. Women must have votes and an equal legal status. But the problem does not end there. It only commences at the point where women begin to affect the political deliberations of the nation. — *YI*, 21-7-21, 229.

The Ideal of Marriage

694. The ideal that marriage aims at is that of spiritual union through the physical. The human love that it incarnates is intended to serve as a stepping stone to divine or universal love. —

695. The wife is not the husband's bondslave, but his companion and his helpmate, and an equal partner in all his joys and sorrows — as free as the husband to choose her own path. — *Auto*, 38.

Child Marriage

696. What is *kanyadan* in the case of little children? Has a father any rights of property over his children? He is their protector not owner. And he forfeits the privilege of protecting when he abuses it by seeking to barter away the liberty of the ward.

The least that a parent, who has so abused his trust as to give in marriage an infant to an old man in his dotage or to a boy hardly in his teens, can do, is to purge himself of his sin by remarrying his daughter when she becomes widowed. As I have said in a previous note, such marriages should be declared null and void from the beginning. — *YI*, 11-11-26, 388.

697. You must be able surely to control your lust to this extent, that you are not going to marry a girl that is under 16 years of age. If I could do so I would lay down 20 as the minimum. Twenty years is early enough even in India. It is we who are responsible for the precocity of the girls, not even the Indian climate, because I know girls of the age of twenty who are pure and undefiled and able to stand the storm that may rage round. Let us not hug that precocity to ourselves. Some *brahman* students tell me that they cannot follow this principle, that they cannot get *brahman* girls sixteen years old, very few *brahmans* keep their daughters unmarried till that age, the *brahman* girls are married mostly before 10, 12 and 13 years. Then I say to the *brahman* youth, "Cease to be a *brahman*, if you cannot possibly control yourself. Choose a grown up girl of 16 who became a widow when she was a child. If you cannot get a *brahman* widow who has reached that age, then go and take any girl you like. And I tell you that the God of the Hindus will pardon that boy who has preferred to marry out of his caste rather than ravish a girl of twelve. When your heart is not pure and you cannot master your passions, you cease to be an educated man. You have called your institution a premier institution. I want you to live up to the name of the premier institution which must produce boys who will occupy the front rank in character. And what is education without

character and what is character without elementary personal purity? *Brahmanism* I adore. I have defended *Varnashrama Dharma.* But *brahmanism* that can tolerate untouchability, virgin widowhood, spoliation of virgins, stinks in my nostrils. It is a parody of *brahmanism.* There is no knowledge of Brahman therein. There is no true interpretation of the scriptures. It is undiluted animalism. *Brahmanism* is made of sterner stuff. — *YI*, 15-9-27, 314.

The Dowry System

698. The system has to go. Marriage must cease to be a matter of arrangement made by parents for money. The system is intimately connected with caste. So long as the choice is restricted to a few hundred young men or young women of a particular caste, the system will persist no matter what is said against it. The girls or boys or their parents will have to break the bonds of caste if the evil is to be eradicated. All this means education of a character that will revolutionize the mentality of the youth of the nation. — *H*, 23-5-36, 117.

699. There should be work done in the schools and colleges and amongst the parents of girls. The parents should so educate their daughters that they would refuse to marry a young man who wanted a price for marrying and would rather remain spinsters than be party to the degrading terms. The only honourable terms in marriage are mutual love and mutual consent. — *YI*, 27-12-28, 431.

The Choice of Mates and Social Interference

700. (Referring to a case of suicide, Gandhiji wrote:)

In my opinion such marriages as are interdicted in a particular society cannot be recognized all at once or at the will of the individual. Nor has society or relatives of parties concerned any right to impose their will upon and forcibly curtail the liberty of action of the young people who may want to contract such marriages. In the instance cited by the correspondent both the parties had fully attained maturity. They could well think for themselves. No one had a right forcibly to prevent them from marrying each other if they

wanted to. Society could at the most refuse to recognize the marriage, but it was the height of tyranny to drive them to suicide.

Marriage taboos are not universal and are largely based on social usage. The usage varies from province to province and as between different divisions. This does not mean that the youth may ride rough-shod over all established social customs and inhibitions. Before they decide to do so, they must convert public opinion to their side. In the meantime, the individuals concerned ought patiently to bide their time, or if they cannot do that calmly and quietly to face the consequences of social ostracism.

At the same time it is equally the duty of society not to take up a heartless, step-motherly attitude towards those who might disregard or break the established conventions. In the instance described by my correspondent the guilt of driving the young couple to suicide certainly rests on the shoulders of society if the version that is before me is correct. — *H*, 29-5-37, 125.

Marriage and Love

701. A correspondent laid down the following conditions of marriage: (1) Mutual attraction or love; (2) Eugenic fitness; (3) Approval and consent of the respective families concerned; and consideration for the interest of the social order to which one belongs; (4) Spiritual development.

I accept generally the conditions for an ideal marriage enumerated by my correspondent. But I would change their order of importance and put 'love' last in the list. By giving it the first place, the other conditions are liable to be overshadowed by it altogether and rendered more or less nugatory. Therefore, spiritual development ought to be given the first place in the choice for marriage. Service should come next, family considerations and the interest of the social order should have the third place, and mutual attraction or 'love' the fourth and the last place. This means that 'love' alone, where the other three conditions are not fulfilled, should not be held as a valid reason for marriage. At the same time, marriage where there is no love should equally be ruled out

even though all the other conditions are fully complied with. I should score out the condition of eugenic fitness, because the begetting of offspring being the central purpose of marriage, eugenic fitness cannot be treated as a 'condition'; it is the *sine qua non* of marriage. —*H*, 5-6-37, 131.

The Married Estate

702. A sister, who is a good worker, and was anxious to remain celibate in order to serve better the country's cause, has recently married having met the mate of her dreams. But she imagines that in doing so she has done wrong and fallen from the high ideal which she had set before herself. I have tried to rid her mind of this delusion. It is no doubt an excellent thing for girls to remain unmarried for the sake of service, but the fact is that only one in a million is able to do so. Marriage is a natural thing in life, and to consider it derogatory in any sense is wholly wrong. When one imagines any act a fall it is difficult, however hard one tries, to raise oneself. The ideal is to look upon marriage as a sacrament and therefore to lead a life of self-restraint in the married estate. Marriage in Hinduism is one of the four *ashramas*. In fact the other three are based on it.

The duty of the above-mentioned and other sisters who think like her is, therefore, not to look down upon marriage but to give it its due place and make of it the sacrament it is. If they exercise the necessary self-restraint, they will find growing within themselves a greater strength for service. She who wishes to serve will naturally choose a partner in life who is of the same mind, and their joint service will be the country's gain. —*H*, 22-3-42, 88.

Divorce

703. Marriage confirms the right of union between two partners to the exclusion of all the others when in their joint opinion they consider such union to be desirable, but it confers no right upon one partner to demand obedience of the other to one's wish for union. What should be done when one partner on moral or other grounds cannot conform

to the wishes of the other is a separate question. Personally, if divorce was the only alternative, I should not hesitate to accept it, rather than interrupt my moral progress, — assuming that I want to restrain myself on purely moral grounds. — *YI*, 8-10-25, 346.

Widow Remarriage

704. The total of 1921 is a trifle higher than for the two (previous) decades. They only demonstrate still further the enormity of the wrong done to the Hindu girl widows. We cry out for cow-protection in the name of religion, but we refuse protection to the girl widow. In the name of religion we force widowhood upon our three lakhs of girl widows who could not understand the import of the marriage ceremony. To force widowhood upon little girls is a brutal crime for which we Hindus are daily paying dearly. If our conscience was truly awakened there would be no marriage before 15, let alone widowhood, and we would declare that these three lakhs of girls were never married. Voluntary widowhood consciously adopted by a woman who has felt the affection of a partner adds grace and dignity to life, sanctifies the home and uplifts religion itself. Widowhood imposed by religion or custom is an unbearable yoke and defiles the home by secret vice and degrades religion.

If we would be pure, if we would save Hinduism, we must rid ourselves of this poison of enforced widowhood. The reform must begin by those who have girl widows taking courage in both their hands and seeing that the child widows in their charge are duly and well married — not remarried. They were never really married. —*YI*, 5-8-26, 276.

705. Widow-remarriage is no sin — if it be, it is as much a sin as the marriage of a widower is. All widowhood is not holy. It is an adornment to her who can observe it. If this sister has the courage, then let her speak out her mind to her uncle and brothers and seek their help. If they cannot assist in the marriage, then the sister will have to quit their house and take refuge in some widow-remarriage institution. — (Translated from the Hindi *Navajivan* of 9-5-29.)

The Purdah

706. Chastity is not a hot-house growth. It cannot be protected by the surrounding wall of the *purdah.* It must grow from within, and to be worth anything it must be capable of withstanding every unsought temptation. — *YI*, 3-2-27, 37.

707. And why is there all this morbid anxiety about female purity ? Have women any say in the matter of male purity ? We hear nothing of women's anxiety about men's chastity. Why should men arrogate to themselves the right to regulate female purity ? It cannot be superimposed from without. It is a matter of evolution from within and therefore of individual self-effort. — *YI*, 25-11-26, 415.

Co-education

708. I cannot definitely state as yet whether it will be successful or not. It does not seem to have succeeded in the West. I tried it myself years ago when I even made boys and girls sleep in the same verandah with no partition between them, Mrs. Gandhi and myself sharing the verandah with them. I must say it brought undesirable results.

Q. But do not worse things happen in purdah-ridden communities ?

A. Yes, of course, but co-education is still in an experimental stage and we cannot definitely say one way or the other as to its results. I think we should begin with the family first. There boys and girls should grow together freely and naturally. Then co-education will come of itself. — *ABP*, 12-1-35.

Contraception

709. If it is contended that birth control is necessary for the nation because of over-population, I dispute the proposition. It has never been proved. In my opinion, by a proper land-system, better agriculture and a supplementary industry, this country is capable of supporting twice as many people as there are today. But I have joined hands with the advocates of birth control in India from the standpoint of the present political condition of the country. — *YI*, 2-4-25, 118.

710. Q. For the sake of the mother whose health is drained away by too many children and for the sake of children themselves, may not birth control through contraceptives be resorted to as the next best thing to self-control?

A. Women should have to resist their husbands. If contraceptives are resorted to, frightful results will follow. Men and women will be living for sex alone. They will become soft-brained, unhinged, in fact mental and moral wrecks.

Q. Even in exceptional cases where women are too weak for childbearing or where either of the parents is diseased can't this method be resorted to?

A. No. In cases stated above it is better that husband and wife should live apart.

I consider it inhuman to impose sterilization law on the people. But in cases of individuals with chronic diseases, it is desirable to have them sterilized if they are agreeable to it. Sterilization is a sort of contraceptive and though I am against the use of contraceptives in case of women, I do not mind voluntary sterilization in case of man since he is the aggressor.

(Mrs. Nair asked if contraceptives were not permitted, how the population problem could be solved; to which Gandhiji replied that nature would solve the problem. If people multiplied like rabbits, they will die like rabbits.)
—*ABP*, 12-1-35.

711. Q. Is the reason you object to artificial means of birth control because of the means or the act?

A. Yes. I object for the latter reason. I have felt that during the years still left to me if I can drive home to women's minds the truth that they are free, we shall have no birth control problem in India. If they will only learn to say 'no' to their husbands when they approach them carnally . . . . The real problem is that they do not want to resist them.

Q. You are giving them advice which they cannot accept. Would it not make their condition worse?

A. Not if they learn the art of resistance. It boils down to education. I want woman to learn the primary

right of resistance. She thinks now that she has not got it. Among the women of India it is most difficult to drive home this truth. If I were to devote myself to birth control I would miss this primary education.

The case for birth control is not hopelessly weak, otherwise these brilliant men would not be aligned with it. If you eliminate birth control there would be other methods. As soon as you agree to eliminate certain methods as harmful, you are bound to find others. In the cases you tell of, as soon as I made the discovery I would have seen to it that the men and women were separated.

Q. But what about the woman's economic condition? She has had no preparation to support herself, especially in India. She has depended upon marriage and her husband for maintenance and her bread and butter. Who is to take care of the children? You must think of these things when you suggest separation.

A. You must devise means. I might suggest that the State take care of them. Or the law might be called in to give a divorce. At present, divorce is granted on grounds of infidelity. In the future it may be granted on grounds of health. Even then some hard cases will occur.

Q. Mr. Gandhi, there are thousands, millions, who regard your word as that of a saint. How can you ask them who are so humble, so weak, to follow, when you who are so much stronger and wiser, have taken years to bring about that self-control in your life?

Mr. Gandhi just smiled.

—Mrs. Margaret Sanger in *Asia*, November, 1936, p. 698-702.

XVII

ON EDUCATION

712. Real education consists in drawing the best out of yourself. What better book can there be than the book of humanity ? — *H*, 30-3-34, 55.

National Education

713. So many strange things have been said about my views on national education, that it would perhaps not be out of place to formulate them before the public.

In my opinion the existing system of education is defective, apart from its association with an utterly unjust Government, in three most important matters :

(1) It is based upon foreign culture to the almost entire exclusion of indigenous culture,

(2) It ignores the culture of the heart and the hand, and confines itself simply to the head,

(3) Real education is impossible through a foreign medium.

Let us examine the three defects. Almost from the commencement, the text-books deal, not with things the boys and the girls have always to deal with in their homes, but things to which they are perfect strangers. It is not through the text-books, that a lad learns what is right and what is wrong in the home life. He is never taught to have any pride in his surroundings. The higher he goes, the farther he is removed from his home, so that at the end of his education he becomes estranged from his surroundings. He feels no poetry about the home life. The village scenes are all a sealed book to him. His own civilization is presented to him as imbecile, barbarous, superstitious and useless for all practical purposes. His education is calculated to wean him from his traditional culture. And if the mass of educated youths are not entirely denationalized, it is because the ancient culture is too deeply embedded in them to be altogether uprooted even by an education adverse to its growth. If I had my way, I would certainly destroy the

majority of the present text-books and cause to be written text-books which have a bearing on and correspondence with the home life, so that a boy as he learns may react upon his immediate surroundings.

Secondly, whatever may be true of other countries, in India at any rate where more than eighty per cent of the population is agricultural and another ten per cent. industrial, it is a crime to make education merely literary and to unfit boys and girls for manual work in after-life. Indeed I hold that as the larger part of our time is devoted to labour for earning our bread, our children must from their infancy be taught the dignity of such labour. Our children should not be so taught as to despise labour. There is no reason, why a peasant's son after having gone to a school should become useless as he does become as agricultural labourer. It is a sad thing that our schoolboys look upon manual labour with disfavour, if not contempt. Moreover, in India, if we expect, as we must, every boy and girl of school-going age to attend public schools, we have not the means to finance education in accordance with the existing style, nor are millions of parents able to pay the fees that are at present imposed. Education to be universal must therefore be free. I fancy that even under an ideal system of government, we shall not be able to devote two thousand million rupees which we should require for finding education for all the children of school-going age. It follows, therefore, that our children must be made to pay in *labour* partly or wholly for all the education they receive. Such universal labour to be profitable can only be (to my thinking) hand-spinning and hand-weaving. But for the purposes of my proposition, it is immaterial whether we have spinning or any other form of labour, so long as it can be turned to account. Only, it will be found upon examination, that on a practical, *profitable and extensive scale, there is no occupation other* than the processes connected with cloth-production which can be introduced in our schools throughout India.

The introduction of manual training will serve a double purpose in a poor country like ours. It will pay for the

education of our children and teach them an occupation on which they can fall back in after-life, if they choose, for earning a living. Such a system must make our children self-reliant. Nothing will demoralize the nation so much as that we should learn to despise labour.

One word only as to the education of the heart. I do not believe, that this can be imparted through books. It can only be done through the living touch of the teacher. And, who are the teachers in the primary and even secondary schools ? Are they men and women of faith and character ? Have they themselves received the training of the heart ? Are they ever expected to take care of the permanent element in the boys and girls placed under their charge ? Is not the method of engaging teachers for lower schools an effective bar against character ? Do the teachers get even a living wage ? And we know, that the teachers of primary schools are not selected for their patriotism. They only come who cannot find any other employment.

Finally, the medium of instruction. My views on this point are too well-known to need restating. The foreign medium has caused brain-fag, put an undue strain upon the nerves of our children, made them crammers and imitators, unfitted them for original work and thought, and disabled them for filtrating their learning to the family or the masses. The foreign medium has made our children practically foreigners in their own land. It is the greatest tragedy of the existing system. The foreign medium has prevented the growth of our vernaculars. If I had the powers of a despot, I would today stop the tuition of our boys and girls through a foreign medium, and require all the teachers and professors on pain of dismissal to introduce the change forthwith. I would not wait for the preparation of text-books. They will follow the change. It is an evil that needs a summary remedy.

My uncompromising opposition to the foreign medium has resulted in an unwarranted charge being levelled against me of being hostile to foreign culture or the learning of the English language. No reader of *Young India* could have missed the statement often made by me in these pages,

that I regard English as the language of international commerce and diplomacy, and therefore consider its knowledge on the part of some of us as essential. As it contains some of the richest treasures of thought and literature, I would certainly encourage its careful study among those who have linguistic talents and expect them to translate those treasures for the nation in its vernaculars.

Nothing can be farther from my thought than that we should become exclusive or erect barriers. But I do respectfully contend that an appreciation of other cultures can fitly follow, never precede, an appreciation and assimilation of our own. It is my firm opinion that no culture has treasures so rich as ours has. We have not known it, we have been made even to deprecate its study and depreciate its value. We have almost ceased to live it. An academic grasp without practice behind it is like an embalmed corpse, perhaps lovely to look at but nothing to inspire or ennoble. My religion forbids me to belittle or disregard other cultures, as it insists under pain of civil suicide upon imbibing and living my own. —*YI*, 1-9-21, 276.

The Cause of the Vernaculars

714. It is evident that unless we advance this cause, we shall not be able to remove the growing intellectual and cultural gulf between our men and women and between the classes and the masses. It is also equally certain that the vernacular medium alone can stimulate originality in thought in the largest number of persons. — *YI*, 21-4-20, *Tagore*, 465.

Character-building, First

715. *Q.* What is your goal in education when India obtains self-rule ?

A. Character-building. I would try to develop courage, strength, virtue, the ability to forget oneself in working towards great aims. This is more important than literacy, academic learning is only a means to this greater end. That is why India's great lack of literacy, deplorable as it is, does not appeal to me nor make me feel that India is unfit for self-rule.

Q. Would you try to bring about any specific kind of social organization through education?

A. I would feel that if we succeed in building the character of the individual, society will take care of itself. I would be quite willing to trust the organization of society to individuals so developed.

Q. In developing the new national spirit in India would you like to make patriotic feelings so strong that duty to one's country would be a higher good than obeying one's personal conscience?

A. I hope that will never be. One's own inner convictions come first always. But in a nation where character is developed in all individuals, there can be no conflict between the dictates of one's own conscience and those of the State. — Carlton Washburne : *Remakers of Mankind.* (1932), p. 104-5.

The Place of Literacy

716. Literary training by itself adds not an inch to one's moral height and character-building is independent of literary training. — *YI*, 1-6-21, 172.

717. But although much good and useful work can be done without a knowledge of the three R's, it is my firm belief that we cannot always do without such knowledge. It develops and sharpens one's intellect, and it increases our capacity of doing good. I have never placed an unnecessarily high value on the knowledge of the three R's. I am only attempting to assign its proper place to it. I have pointed out from time to time that there is no justification for men to deprive women of, or to deny to them, equal rights on the ground of their illiteracy. But education is essential for enabling women to assert these natural rights, to exercise them wisely, and to work for their expansion; again, the true knowledge of self is unattainable by the millions who lack such education. Many a book is full of innocent pleasure, and this will be denied to us without education. It is no exaggeration to say that a human being without education is not far removed from an animal. Education, therefore, is

necessary for women as it is for men. — (Speech delivered on 20-2-18) *WSI*, 3.

718. I am not sure that it is not better for the children to have much of the preliminary instruction imparted to them vocally. To impose on children of tender age a knowledge of the alphabet and the ability to read before they can gain general knowledge is to deprive them, whilst they are fresh, of the power of assimilating instruction by word of mouth. —*YI*, 16-9-26, 323.

719. The utterly false idea that intelligence can be developed only through book-reading should give place to the truth that the quickest development of the mind can be achieved by artisan's work being learnt in a scientific manner. True development of the mind commences immediately the apprentice is taught at every step why a particular manipulation of the hand or a tool is required. The problem of the unemployment of students can be solved without difficulty, if they will rank themselves among the common labourers. —*H*, 9-1-37, 386.

Basic Education

720. I hold that true education of the intellect can only come through a proper exercise and training of the bodily organs, e.g. hands, feet, eyes, ears, nose, etc. In other words an intelligent use of the bodily organs in a child provides the best and quickest way of developing his intellect. But unless the development of the mind and body goes hand in hand with a corresponding awakening of the soul, the former alone would prove to be a poor lop-sided affair. By spiritual training I mean education of the heart. A proper and all-round development of the mind, therefore, can take place only when it proceeds *pari passu* with the education of the physical and spiritual faculties of the child. They constitute an indivisible whole. According to this theory, therefore, it would be a gross fallacy to suppose that they can be developed piecemeal or independently of one another. —*H*, 8-5-37, 104.

721. By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man — body, mind and spirit. Literacy

is not the end of education nor even the beginning. It is only one of the means whereby man and woman can be educated. Literacy in itself is no education. I would therefore begin the child's education by teaching it a useful handicraft and enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training. Thus every school can be made self-supporting, the condition being that the State takes over the manufactures of these schools.

I hold that the highest development of the mind and the soul is possible under such a system of education. Only every handicraft has to be taught not merely mechanically as is done today but scientifically, i. e. the child should know the why and the wherefore of every process. I am not writing this without some confidence, because it has the backing of experience. This method is being adopted more or less completely wherever spinning is being taught to workers. I have myself taught sandal-making and even spinning on these lines with good results. This method does not exclude a knowledge of history and geography. But I find that this is best taught by transmitting such general information by word of mouth. One imparts ten times as much in this manner as by reading and writing. The signs of the alphabet may be taught later when the pupil has learnt to distinguish wheat from chaff and when he has somewhat developed his or her tastes. This is a revolutionary proposal but it saves immense labour and enables a student to acquire in one year what he may take much longer to learn. This means all-round economy. Of course the pupil learns mathematics whilst he is learning his handicraft.

I attach the greatest importance to primary education which according to my conception should be equal to the present matriculation less English. — *H*, 31-7-37, 197.

722. We have up to now concentrated on stuffing children's minds with all kinds of information, without ever thinking of stimulating and developing them. Let us now cry a halt and concentrate on educating the child properly through manual work, not as a side activity, but as the prime means of intellectual training. You have to train the boys in one occupation or another. Round this special

occupation you will train up his mind, his body, his handwriting, his artistic sense, and so on. He will be master of the craft he learns. — *H*, 18-9-37, 261.

723. The scheme that I wish to place before you today is not the teaching of some handicrafts side by side with so-called liberal education. I want that the whole education should be imparted through some handicraft or industry. It might be objected that in the middle ages only handicrafts were taught to the students; but the occupational training, then, was far from serving an educational purpose. The crafts were taught only for the sake of the crafts, without any attempt to develop the intellect as well. In this age those born to certain professions had forgotten them, had taken to clerical careers and were lost to countryside. The remedy lies in imparting the whole art and science of a craft through practical training and there-through imparting the whole education.

I am very keen on finding the expenses of a teacher through the product of the manual work of his pupils, because I am convinced that there is no other way to carry education to crores of our children. We cannot wait until we have the necessary revenue and until the Viceroy reduces the military expenditure. You should bear in mind that this primary education would include the elementary principles of sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, of doing their own work, helping parents at home etc. The present generation of boys know no cleanliness, no self-help, and are physically weak. I would therefore, give compulsory physical training through musical drill. — *Ed. Rec.*, 61, 63 or *H*, 30-10-37, 323.

724. I am a firm believer in the principle of free and compulsory primary education for India. I also hold that we shall realize this only by teaching the children a useful vocation and utilizing it as a means for cultivating their mental, physical and spiritual faculties. Let no one consider these economic calculations in connection with education as sordid or out of place. There is nothing essentially sordid about economic calculations. True economics never militates against the highest ethical standard, just as true ethics to

be worth its name must, at the same time, be also good economics. —*H*, 9-10-37, 292.

725. What kinds of vocations are the fittest for being taught to children in urban schools? There is no hard and fast rule about it. But my reply is clear. I want to resuscitate the villages of India. Today our villages have become a mere appendage to the cities. They exist, as it were, to be exploited by the latter and depend on the latters' sufferance. This is unnatural. It is only when the cities realize the duty of making an adequate return to the villages for the strength and sustenance which they derive from them, instead of selfishly exploiting them, that a healthy and moral relationship between the two will spring up. And if the city children are to play their part in this great and noble work of social reconstruction, the vocations through which they are to achieve their education ought to be directly related to the requirements of the villages. So far as I can see, the various processes of cotton manufacture from ginning and cleaning of cotton to the spinning of yarn, answer this test as nothing else does. Even today the cotton is grown in the villages and is ginned and spun and converted into cloth in the cities. But the chain of processes which cotton undergoes in the mills from the beginning to the end constitutes a huge tragedy of waste in men, materials and mechanical power.

My plan to impart primary education through the medium of village handicrafts like spinning and carding, etc. is thus conceived as the spear head of a silent social revolution fraught with the most far-reaching consequences. It will provide a healthy and moral basis of relationship between the city and the village and thus go a long way towards eradicating some of the worst evils of the present social insecurity and poisoned relationship between the classes. It will check the progressive decay of our villages and lay the foundation of a juster social order in which there is no unnatural division between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' and everybody is assured of a living wage and the right to freedom. And all this would be accomplished without the horror of a bloody class-war or a colossal capital

expenditure such as would be involved in the mechanization of a vast continent like India. Nor would it entail a helpless dependence on foreign imported machinery or technical skill. Lastly, by obviating the necessity for highly specialized talent, it would place the destiny of the masses, as it were, in their own hands. But who will bell the cat ? Will the city-folk listen to me at all ? Or, will mine remain a mere cry in the wilderness ? Replies to these and similar questions will depend more on lovers of education like my correspondent living in cities than on me. — *H*, 9-10-37, 293.

Higher Education

726. I would revolutionize college education and relate it to national necessities. There would be degrees for mechanical and other engineers. They would be attached to the different industries which would pay for the training of the graduates they need. Thus the Tatas would be expected to run a college for training engineers under the supervision of the State, the mill associations would run among them a college for training graduates whom they need. Similarly for other industries that may be named. Commerce will have its college. There remain arts, medicine and agriculture. Several private arts colleges are today self-supporting. The State would, therefore, cease to run its own. Medical colleges would be attached to certified hospitals. As they are popular among monied men they may be expected by voluntary contributions to support medical colleges. And agricultural colleges to be worthy of the name must be self-supporting. I have a painful experience of some agricultural graduates. Their knowledge is superficial. They lack practical experience. But if they had their apprenticeship on farms which are self-sustained and answer the requirements of the country, they would not have to gain experience after getting their degrees and at the expense of their employers. — *H*, 31-7-37, 197.

727. The Rt. Hon. Shri Srinivasa Shastri has criticized, as he had a perfect right to do, the views I timidly and very briefly expressed some time ago on higher education. I entertain a very high regard for him as man, patriot and scholar. It is therefore always painful to me when I find

myself disagreeing with him. And yet duty compels me to re-express my views on higher education more fully than before, so that the reader may make out for himself the difference between his views and mine.

I admit my limitations. I have no university education worth the name. My high school career was never above the average, I was thankful if I could pass my examinations. Distinction in the school was beyond my aspiration. Nevertheless I do hold very strong views on education in general, including what is called higher education. And I owe it to the country that my views should be clearly known and taken for what they may be worth. I must shed the timidity that has led almost to self-suppression. I must not fear ridicule, and even loss of popularity or prestige. If I hide my belief, I shall never correct errors of judgment. I am always eager to discover them and more than eager to correct them.

Let me now state my conclusions held for a number of years and enforced wherever I had opportunity of enforcing them:

(1) I am not opposed to education even of the highest type attainable in the world.

(2) The State must pay for it wherever it has definite use for it.

(3) I am opposed to all higher education being paid for from the general revenue.

(4) It is my firm conviction that the vast amount of the so-called education in arts, given in our colleges, is sheer waste and has resulted in unemployment among the educated classes. What is more, it has destroyed the health, both mental and physical, of the boys and girls who have the misfortune to go through the grind in our colleges.

(5) The medium of a foreign language through which higher education has been imparted in India has caused incalculable intellectual and moral injury to the nation. We are too near our own times to judge the enormity of the damage done. And we who have received such education have both to be victims and judges — an almost impossible feat.

I must give my reasons for the conclusions set forth above. This I can best do, perhaps, by giving a chapter from my own experience.

Up to the age of 12 all the knowledge I gained was through Gujarati, my mother tongue. I knew then something of Arithmetic, History and Geography. Then I entered a High School. For the first three years the mother tongue was still the medium. But the school-master's business was to drive English into the pupil's head. Therefore more than half of our time was given to learning English and mastering its arbitrary spelling and pronunciation. It was a painful discovery to have to learn a language that was not pronounced as it was written. It was a strange experience to have to learn the spelling by heart. But that is by the way, and irrelevant to my argument. However, for the first three years, it was comparatively plain sailing.

The pillory began with the fourth year. Everything had to be learnt through English — Geometry, Algebra, Chemistry, Astronomy, History, Geography. The tyranny of English was so great that even Sanskrit or Persian had to be learnt through English, not through the mother tongue. If any boy spoke in the class in Gujarati which he understood, he was punished. It did not matter to the teacher if a boy spoke bad English which he could neither pronounce correctly nor understand fully. Why should the teacher worry? His own English was by no means without blemish. It could not be otherwise. English was as much a foreign language to him as to his pupils. The result was chaos. We the boys had to learn many things by heart, though we could not understand them fully and often not at all. My head used to reel as the teacher was struggling to make his exposition on Geometry understood by us. I could make neither head nor tail of Geometry till we reached the 13th theorem of the first book of Euclid. And let me confess to the reader that in spite of all my love for the mother tongue, I do not to this day know the Gujarati equivalents of the technical terms of Geometry, Algebra and the like. I know now that what I took four years to learn of Arithmetic, Geometry, Algebra, Chemistry and Astronomy, I

should have learnt easily in one year, if I had not to learn them through English but Gujarati. My grasp of the subjects would have been easier and clearer. My Gujarati vocabulary would have been richer. I would have made use of such knowledge in my own home. This English medium created an impassable barrier between me and the members of my family, who had not gone through English schools. My father knew nothing of what I was doing. I could not, even if I had wished it, interest my father in what I was learning. For though he had ample intelligence, he knew not a word of English. I was fast becoming a stranger in my own home. I certainly became a superior person. Even my dress began to undergo imperceptible changes. What happened to me was not an uncommon experience. It was common to the majority.

The first three years in the High School made little addition to my stock of general knowledge. They were a preparation for fitting the boys for teaching them everything through English. High Schools were schools for cultural conquest by the English. The knowledge gained by the three hundred boys of my High School became a circumscribed possession. It was not for transmission to the masses.

A word about literature. We had to learn several books of English prose and English poetry. No doubt all this was nice. But that knowledge has been of no use to me in serving or bringing me in touch with the masses. I am unable to say that if I had not learnt what I did of English prose and poetry, I should have missed a rare treasure. If I had, instead, passed those precious seven years in mastering Gujarati and had learnt Mathematics, Sciences, and Sanskrit and other subjects through Gujarati, I could easily have shared the knowledge so gained with my neighbours. I would have enriched Gujarati, and who can say that I would not have, with my habit of application and my inordinate love for the country and mother tongue, made a richer and greater contribution to the service of the masses?

I must not be understood to decry English or its noble literature. The columns of the *Harijan* are sufficient evidence of my love of English. But the nobility of its literature

cannot avail the Indian nation any more than the temperate climate or the scenery of England can avail her. India has to flourish in her own climate and scenery and her own literature, even though all the three may be inferior to the English climate, scenery and literature. We and our children must build on our own heritage. If we borrow another, we impoverish our own. We can never grow on foreign victuals. I want the nation to have the treasures contained in that language, and for that matter in the other languages of the world, through its own vernaculars. I do not need to learn Bengali in order to know the beauties of Rabindranath's matchless productions. I get them through good translations. Gujarati boys and girls do not need to learn Russian to appreciate Tolstoy's short stories. They learn them through good translations. It is the boast of Englishmen that the best of the world's literary output is in the hands of that nation in simple English inside of a week of its publication. Why need I learn English to get at the best of what Shakespeare and Milton thought and wrote?

It would be good economy to set apart a class of students whose business would be to learn the best of what is to be learnt in the different languages of the world and give the translation in the vernaculars. Our masters chose the wrong way for us, and habit has made the wrong appear as right.

I find daily proof of the increasing and continuing wrong being done to the millions by our false de-Indianizing education. Those graduates who are my valued associates themselves flounder when they have to give expression to their innermost thoughts. They are strangers in their own homes. Their vocabulary in the mother tongue is so limited that they cannot always finish their speech without having recourse to English words and even sentences. Nor can they exist without English books. I cite the case of my companions to show how deep the evil has gone. For we have made a conscious effort to mend ourselves.

It has been argued that the wastage that occurs in our colleges need not worry us if, out of the collegians, one Jagadish Bose can be produced by them. I should freely subscribe to the argument, if the wastage was unavoidable.

I hope I have shown that it was and is even now avoidable. Moreover the creation of a Bose does not help the argument. For Bose was not a product of the present education. He rose in spite of the terrible handicaps under which he had to labour. And his knowledge became almost intransmissible to the masses. We seem to have come to think that no one can hope to be like a Bose unless he knows English. I cannot conceive a grosser superstition than this. No Japanese feels so helpless as we seem to do.

Nothing but a heroic remedy can deal with the deep-seated evil which I have endeavoured to describe. The Congress Ministers can, if they will, mitigate it, if they cannot remove it.

Universities must be made self-supporting. The State should simply educate those whose services it would need. For all other branches of learning it should encourage private effort. The medium of instruction should be altered at once and at any cost, the provincial languages being given their rightful place. I would prefer temporary chaos in higher education to the criminal waste that is daily accumulating.

In order to enhance the status and the market-value of the provincial languages, I would have the language of the law courts to be the language of the province where the court is situated. The proceedings of the provincial legislatures must be in the language, or even in the languages, of the province where a province has more than one language within its borders. I suggest to the legislators that they could, by enough application, inside of a month, understand the languages of their provinces. There is nothing to prevent a Tamilian from easily learning the simple grammar and a few hundred words of Telugu, Malayalam and Kanarese, all allied to Tamil. At the centre Hindustani must reign supreme.

In my opinion this is not a question to be decided by academicians. They cannot decide through what language the boys and girls of a place are to be educated. That question is already decided for them in every free country. Nor can they decide the subjects to be taught. That depends upon the wants of the country to which they belong. Theirs

is the privilege of enforcing the nation's will in the best manner possible. When this country becomes really free, the question of medium will be settled only one way. The academicians will frame the syllabus and prepare text-books accordingly. And the products of the education of a free India will answer the requirements of the country as today they answer those of the foreign ruler. So long as we the educated classes play with this question, I very much fear we shall not produce the free and healthy India of our dream. We have to grow by strenuous effort out of our bondage, whether it is educational, economical, social or political. The effort itself is three-fourths of the battle.

Thus I claim that I am not an enemy of higher education. But I am an enemy of higher education as it is given in this country. Under my scheme there will be more and better libraries, more and better laboratories, more and better research institutes. Under it we should have an army of chemists, engineers and other experts who will be real servants of the nation, and answer the varied and growing requirements of a people who are becoming increasingly conscious of their rights and wants. And all these experts will speak, not a foreign tongue, but the language of the people. The knowledge gained by them will be the common property of the people. There will be truly original work instead of mere imitation. And the cost will be evenly and justly distributed. — *H*, 9-7-38, 176.

The Future Culture of India

728. The Indian culture of our times is in the making. Many of us are striving to produce a blend of all the cultures which seem today to be in clash with one another. No culture can live, if it attempts to be exclusive. There is no such thing as pure Aryan culture in existence today in India. Whether the Aryans were indigenous to India or were unwelcome intruders, does not interest me much. What does interest me is the fact that my remote ancestors blended with one another with the utmost freedom and we of the present generation are a result of that blend. Whether we are doing any good to the country of our

birth and the tiny globe which sustains us or whether we are a burden, the future alone will show. —*H*, 9-5-36, 100.

729. I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I would have our young men and women with literary tastes to learn as much of English and other world-languages as they like, and then expect them to give the benefits of their learning to India and to the world like a Bose, a Roy or the Poet himself. But I would not have a single Indian to forget, neglect or be ashamed of his mother tongue, or to feel that he or she cannot think or express the best thoughts in his or her own vernacular. Mine is not a religion of the prison-house. — *YI*, 1-6-21, 170.

730. The (Gujarat) Vidyapith does not propose to feed on, or repeat, the ancient cultures. It rather hopes to build a new culture based on the traditions of the past and enriched by the experience of later times. It stands for synthesis of the different cultures that have come to stay in India, that have influenced Indian life, and that, in their turn, have themselves been influenced by the spirit of the soil. This synthesis will naturally be of the Swadeshi type, where each culture is assured its legitimate place, and not of the American pattern, where one dominant culture absorbs the rest, and where the aim is not towards harmony, but towards an artificial and forced unity. — *YI*, 17-11-20, *Tagore*, 45

XVIII

MISCELLANEOUS

Guide to Health

731. Our body has been given to us on the understanding that we should render devoted service to God with its aid. It is our duty to keep it pure and unstained from within as well as from without, so as to render it back to the Giver when the time comes for it, in the state of purity in which we got it. — *GH*, 129.

732. The relation between the body and the mind is so intimate that, if either of them got out of order, the whole system would suffer. Hence it follows that a pure character is the foundation of health in the real sense of the term; and we may say that all evil thoughts and evil passions are but different forms of disease. — *GH*, 8.

733. Perfect health can be attained only by living in obedience to the laws of God, and defying the power of Satan. True happiness is impossible without true health and true health is impossible without a rigid control of the palate. All the other senses will automatically come under control when the palate has been brought under control. And he who has conquered his senses has really conquered the whole world, and he becomes a part of God. — *GH*, 131.

Municipal Sanitation

734. The one thing which we can and must learn from the West is the science of municipal sanitation. The peoples of the West have evolved a science of corporate sanitation and hygiene from which we have much to learn. We must modify Western methods of sanitation to suit our requirements. And as my patriotism is inclusive and admits of no enmity or ill-will, I do not hesitate, in spite of my horror of Western materialism, to take from the West what is beneficial for me. — *YI*, 26-12-24, 430.

Institutions and Public Support

735. It is my settled conviction that no deserving institution ever dies for want of support. Institutions that

have died have done so either because there was nothing in them to commend them to the public or because those in control lost faith, or which is perhaps the same thing, lost stamina. I would therefore urge the conductors of such institutions not to give in because of the general depression. It is a time of test for worthy institutions. — *YI*, 15-10-25, 351.

736. *Q*. What is the outlook, in view of the precarious financial position of our Ashrams and institutions (for Harijan work) today?

A. It is not our financial position, but our moral position that is precarious. No movement or activity that has the sure foundation of the purity of character of its workers, is ever in danger to come to an end for want of funds. Then we in Gujarat have to realize that we must not always depend only on our monied men. We have to tap humbler resources. Our middle classes and even poor classes support so many beggars, so many temples, why will they not support a few good workers? We must beg from door to door, beg grain, beg copper coins, do as they do in Bihar and Maharashtra. In Maharashtra they have *paisa* funds and *mushti* funds. It will be the finest form of propaganda. But remember that everything will depend on the singleness of your purpose, your devotion to the task and the purity of your character. People won't give for such work unless they are sure of our selflessness.

Q. If it is impossible to get the caste Hindus' co-operation in anti-untouchability work, would it not be better to take up the village industries work?

A. That is a delusion. You may be sure that he who gives up Harijan work on a pretext like that will be able to do less for the village industries work. You can't settle down in a village and miss the *harijans* who are the foundation of society. — *H*, 28-11-36, 331.

Running Institutions on Public Money

737. I had learnt at the outset not to carry on public work with borrowed money. One could rely on people's promise in most matters except in matters of money. — *Auto*, 186.

738. The public should be the bank for all public institutions, which should not last a day longer than the public wish. An institution run with the interest of accumulated capital ceases to be amenable to public opinion and becomes autocratic and self-righteous. —*SA*, 202.

739. Take the illustration of the new educational experiment. The experiment I said must go on without asking for monetary help. Otherwise, after my death the whole organization would go to pieces. The fact is that the moment financial stability is assured, spiritual bankruptcy is also assured. —*H*, 10-12-38, 371.

740. After considerable experience with the many public institutions which I have managed, it has become my firm conviction that it is not good to run public institutions on permanent funds. A permanent fund carries in itself the seed of the moral fall of the institution. A public institution means an institution conducted with the approval, and from the funds, of the public. When such an institution ceases to have public support, it forfeits its right to exist. Institutions maintained on permanent funds are often found to ignore public opinion, and are frequently responsible for acts contrary to it. In our country we experience this at every step. Some of the so-called religious trusts have ceased to render any accounts. The trustees have become the owners and are responsible to none. I have no doubt that the ideal is for public institutions to live, like nature, from day to day. The institution that fails to win public support has no right to exist as such. The subscriptions that an institution annually receives are a test of its popularity and the honesty of its management, and I am of opinion that every institution should submit to that test. But let no one misunderstand me. My remarks do not apply to the bodies which cannot, by their very nature, be conducted without permanent buildings. What I mean to say is that the current expenditure should be found from subscriptions voluntarily received from year to year. —*Auto*, 243.

741. Because an institution happens to have plenty of funds it does not mean that it should anyhow spend away

every pie that it possesses. The golden rule is not to hesitate to ask for or spend even a crore when it is absolutely necessary and when it is not, to hoard up every pie though one may have a crore of rupees at one's disposal. — *YI*, 21-5-31, 118.

Public Accounts

742. Public money belongs to the poor public of India than whom there is none poorer on earth. We have to be more wakeful, more cautious, more careful; and let us be ready to account for every pie that we receive from the public. — *YI*, 16-4-31, 74.

743. Carefully kept accounts are a *sine qua non* for any organization. Without properly kept accounts it is impossible to maintain truth in its pristine purity. — *Auto*, 188.

744. If we do not account for every single pie we receive and do not make a judicious use of the funds, we shall deserve to be blotted out of public life. — *YI*, 6-7-21, 209.

On Journalism

745. The sole aim of journalism should be service. — *Auto*, 349.

746. One of the objects of a newspaper is to understand the popular feeling and give expression to it; another is to arouse among the people certain desirable sentiments; and the third is fearlessly to expose popular defects. — *IHR*, 1.

747. Reference to abuses in the States is undoubtedly a necessary part of journalism and it is a means of creating public opinion. Only, my scope is strictly limited; I have taken up journalism not for its sake but merely as an aid to what I have conceived to be my mission in life. My mission is to teach by example and precept under severe restraint the use of the matchless weapon of *satyagraha* which is a direct corollary of non-violence and truth. I am anxious, indeed I am impatient, to demonstrate that there is no remedy for the many ills of life save that of non-violence. It is a solvent strong enough to melt the stoniest heart. To be true to my faith, therefore, I may not write in anger or malice. I may not write idly. I may not write merely to excite passion. The reader can have no

idea of the restraint I have to exercise from week to week in the choice of topics and my vocabulary. It is a training for me. It enables me to peep into myself and to make discoveries of my weaknesses. Often my vanity dictates a smart expression or my anger a harsh adjective. It is a terrible ordeal but a fine exercise to remove these weeds. The reader sees the pages of the *Young India* fairly well-dressed-up and sometimes, with Romain Rolland, he is inclined to say 'what a fine old man this must be.' Well, let the world understand that the fineness is carefully and prayerfully cultivated. And if it has proved acceptable to some whose opinion I cherish, let the reader understand that when that fineness has become perfectly natural, i. e. when I have become incapable of evil and when nothing harsh or haughty occupies, be it momentarily, my thought-world, then and not till then, my non-violence will move all the hearts of all the world. I have placed before me and the reader no impossible ideal or ordeal. —*YI*, 2-7-25, 232.

The Learned Professions

748. If you would spiritualize the practice of law, you must not make your profession subservient to the interests of your purse, but use your profession for the service of your country. —*Ceylon*, 36.

749. Put your talents in the service of the country instead of converting them to £. s. d. If you are a medical man, there is disease enough in India to need all your medical skill. If you are a lawyer, there are differences and quarrels enough in India. Instead of fomenting more trouble, patch up those quarrels and stop litigation. If you are an engineer, build model houses suited to the means and needs of your people and yet full of health and fresh air. There is nothing that you have learnt which cannot be turned to account.

(The friend who had asked the question was an accountant and Gandhiji accordingly said to him): There is dire need everywhere for accountants to audit the accounts of the Congress and its adjunct associations. Come to India—I will give you enough work and also hire—four

annas per day which is surely more than millions in India get. —*YI*, 5-11-31, 334.

750. A medical practitioner from Kenya asks whether medical practitioners can engage in money-lending business or speculation. I have long held the opinion that professional men, whether medical or legal or other, should not seek to add to their income by speculation or other pursuits. It tends to make them careless in their special work. There have been cases in which doctors and lawyers have ruined their reputation by going outside their profession to make money. —*H*, 16-12-39, 379.

On Art

751. There are two aspects of things—the outward and the inward. It is purely a matter of emphasis with me. The outward has no meaning except in so far as it helps the inward. All true art is thus the expression of the soul. The outward forms have value only in so far as they are the expression of the inner spirit in man. Art of that nature has the greatest possible appeal for me. But I know that many call themselves artists, and are recognized as such, and yet in their works there is absolutely no trace of the soul's upward urge and unrest.

All true art must help the soul to realize its inner self. In my own case, I find that I can do entirely without external forms in my soul's realization. My room may have blank walls; and I may even dispense with the roof, so that I may gaze out upon the starry heavens overhead that stretch in an unending expanse of beauty. What conscious art of man can give me the panoramic scenes that open out before me, when I look up to the sky above with all its shining stars ? This, however, does not mean that I refuse to accept the value of productions of art, generally accepted as such, but only that I personally feel how inadequate these are compared with the eternal symbols of beauty in Nature. These productions of man's art have their value only so far as they help the soul onward towards self-realization.

All truths, not merely true ideas, but truthful faces, truthful pictures, or songs, are highly beautiful. People

generally fail to see beauty in truth, the ordinary man runs away from it and becomes blind to the beauty in it. Whenever men begin to see beauty in truth, then true art will arise.

Truly beautiful creations come when right perception is at work. If these moments are rare in life they are also rare in art. — *YI*, 13-11-24, 377.

752. True art takes note not merely of form but also of what lies behind. There is an art that kills and an art that gives life. True art must be evidence of happiness, contentment and purity of its authors. — *YI*, 11-8-21, 253.

753. We have somehow accustomed ourselves to the belief that art is independent of the purity of private life. I can say with all the experience at my command that nothing could be more untrue. As I am nearing the end of my earthly life I can say that purity of life is the highest and truest art. The art of producing good music from a cultivated voice can be achieved by many, but the art of producing that music from the harmony of a pure life is achieved very rarely. —*H*, 19-2-38, 10.

Music

754. Music means rhythm, order. Its effect is electrical. It immediately soothes. Unfortunately like our *shastras*, music has been the prerogative of the few. It has never become nationalized in the modern sense. If I had any influence with volunteer boy scouts and Seva Samiti organizations, I would make compulsory a proper singing in company of national songs. And to that end I should have great musicians attending every Congress or Conference and teaching mass music. — *YI*, 8-9-20, *Tagore*, 763.

Music and Education

755. In Pandit Khare's opinion, based upon wide experience, music should form part of the syllabus of primary education. I heartily endorse the proposition. The modulation of the voice is as necessary as the training of the hand. Physical drill, handicrafts, drawing and music should go hand in hand in order to draw the best out of the boys and girls and create in them a real interest in their tuition.

That this means a revolution in the system of training is admitted. If the future citizens of the State are to build a sure foundation for life's work, these four things are necessary. One has only to visit any primary school to have a striking demonstration of slovenliness, disorderliness and discordant speech. I have no doubt, therefore, that when the Education Ministers in the several provinces recast the system of education and make it answer the requirements of the country, they will not omit the essentials to which I have drawn attention. My plan of primary education certainly comprises these things which easily become possible the moment you remove from the children's shoulders the burden of having to master a difficult foreign language. —*H*, 11-9-37, 250.

Drill

756. The object of mass drill is to enable large bodies of people to perform any movement rhythmically and swiftly and with absolute precision. What a saving in national time and energy it would mean if we could do that in our public meetings and functions! There is a silent music in disciplined movement of masses of men and women. Just now I asked you to move a little towards me so that my low voice may reach you. Had you advanced far enough in your drill, you would have been able to perform that movement with ease without any noise or confusion. There is a rhythm and music in drill that makes action effortless and eliminates fatigue. If the whole nation of three hundred millions could be drilled so as to move together and act together and if necessary to die together as one man, we should attain independence without striking a blow and set an example of a peaceful revolution for the whole world to emulate. —*H*, 31-12-38, 411.

Regarding Ancient Things

757. I do not subscribe to the superstition that everything is good because it is ancient. I do not believe either that anything is good because it is Indian. — *YI*, 8-1-25, 11.

758. I am no indiscriminate worshipper of all that goes under the name 'ancient'. I never hesitate to demolish all

that is evil or immoral, no matter how ancient it may be, but with that reservation. I must confess to you that I am an adorer of ancient institutions and it hurts me to think that people in their rush for everything modern despise all their ancient traditions and ignore them in their lives. — *Ceylon*, 107.

759. I came by a process of examination to this irresistible conclusion that there was nothing so very ancient in this world as these two good old things — truth and non-violence. And working along these lines of truth and non-violence, I also discovered that I must not attempt to revive ancient practices if they were inconsistent with, call it if you will, modern life as it must be lived. Ancient practices may have been perfectly good and perhaps absolutely necessary at the time when those practices were adopted, but they might be entirely out of date with modern needs and still not be contrary to truth or non-violence. — *Ceylon*, 131.

Swadeshi

760. I have never considered the exclusion of everything foreign under every conceivable circumstance as a part of Swadeshi. The broad definition of Swadeshi is the use of all home-made things to the exclusion of foreign things, in so far as such use is necessary for the protection of home-industry, more especially those industries without which India will become pauperized. In my opinion, therefore, Swadeshi which excludes the use of everything foreign, no matter how beneficent it may be, and irrespective of the fact that it impoverishes nobody, is a narrow interpretation of Swadeshi — *YI*, 17-6-26, 218.

761. But even Swadeshi, like any other good thing, can be ridden to death if it is made a fetish. That is a danger that must be guarded against. To reject foreign manufactures merely because they are foreign, and to go on wasting national time and money in the promotion in one's country of manufactures for which it is not suited would be criminal folly, and a negation of the Swadeshi spirit. A true votary of Swadeshi will never harbour ill-will towards the foreigner, he will not be moved by antagonism towards anybody on earth. Swadeshism is not a cult of hatred. It

is a doctrine of selfless service, that has its roots in the purest *ahimsa*, i. e. love. — *YM*, 95.

762. I wish to utter a word of caution against your believing that I am an indiscriminate despiser of everything that comes from the West. There are many things which I have myself assimilated from the West. — *Ceylon*, 108.

True Swadeshi

763. If I have to use the adjective 'true' before Swadeshi, a critic may well ask, 'Is there also false Swadeshi?' Unfortunately I have to answer 'Yes.' As, since the days of Khadi, I am supposed to be an authority on Swadeshi, numerous conundrums are presented to me by correspondents. And I have been obliged to distinguish between the two kinds of Swadeshi. If foreign capital is mixed with indigenous, or if foreign talent is mixed with indigenous, is the enterprise Swadeshi? There are other questions too. But I had better reproduce the definition I gave to a Minister the other day. 'Any article is Swadeshi if it subserves the interest of the millions, even though the capital and talent are foreign but under effective Indian control.' Thus Khadi of the definition of the A. I. S. A. would be true Swadeshi even though the capital may be all foreign and there may be Western specialists employed by the Indian Board. Conversely, Bata's rubber or other shoes would be foreign though the labour employed may be all Indian and the capital also found by India. The manufactures will be doubly foreign because the control will be in foreign hands and the article, no matter how cheap it is, will oust the village tanner mostly and the village *mochi* always. Already the *mochis* of Bihar have begun to feel the unhealthy competition. The Bata shoe may be the saving of Europe; it will mean the death of our village shoemaker and tanner. I have given two telling illustrations, both partly imaginary. For in the A. I. S. A. the capital is all indigenous and the whole of the talent also. But I would love to secure the engineering talent of the West to give me a village wheel which will beat the existing wheels, though deep down in me I have the

belief that the improvements that indigenous talent has made are by no means to be despised. But this is a digression. I do hope that those Ministers and others who guide or serve the public will cultivate the habit of distinguishing between true and false Swadeshi. — *H*, 25-2-39, 25.

European Civilization

764. European civilization is no doubt suited for the Europeans but it will mean ruin for India, if we endeavour to copy it. This is not to say that we may not adopt and assimilate whatever may be good and capable of assimilation by us as it does not also mean that even the Europeans will not have to part with whatever evil might have crept into it. The incessant search for material comforts and their multiplication is such an evil, and I make bold to say that the Europeans themselves will have to remodel their outlook, if they are not to perish under the weight of the comforts to which they are becoming slaves. It may be that my reading is wrong, but I know that for India to run after the Golden Fleece is to court certain death. Let us engrave in our hearts the motto of a Western philosopher, 'Plain living and high thinking'. Today it is certain that the millions cannot have high living and we the few who profess to do the thinking for the masses run the risk, in a vain search after high living, of missing high thinking. —*YI*, 30-4-31, 88.

765. As to the habit of looking to the West for light, I can give little guidance if the whole of my life has not provided any. Light used to go out from the East. If the Eastern reservoir has become empty, naturally the East will have to borrow from the West. I wonder if light, if it is light and not a miasma, can ever be exhausted. As a boy I learnt that it grew with the giving. Anyway I have acted in that belief and have, therefore, traded on the ancestral capital. It has never failed me. This, however, does not mean that I must act like a frog in the well. There is nothing to prevent me from profiting by the light that may come from the West. Only I must take care that I am not overpowered by the glamour of the West. I must not mistake the glamour for true light. — *H*, 13-1-40, 414.

To Foreigners in any Land

766. Even as a cup of milk which is full up to the brim does not overflow when sugar is gently added to it, the sugar accommodating itself in the milk, in the same way, I would like you to live in this island so as not to become interlopers, and so as to enrich the life of the people in whose midst you may be living. —*Ceylon*, 116.

Non-violence and Capital

767. (Read after 154 and 274) Q. Is it possible to defend by non-violence anything which can only be gained through violence ?

A. It followed from what Gandhiji had said above that what was gained by violence could not only not be defended by non-violence but the latter required the abandonment of the ill-gotten gains.

Q. Is the accumulation of capital possible except through violence whether open or tacit ?

A. Such accumulation by private persons was impossible except through violent means, but accumulation by the State in a non-violent society was not only possible, it was desirable and inevitable.

Q. Whether a man accumulates material or moral wealth, he does so only through the help or co-operation of other members of society. Has he then the moral right to use any of it mainly for personal advantage ?

A. No, he has no moral right. —*H*, 16-2-47, 25.

Intellectual and Manual Labour

768. (Read after 200) Q. Why should we insist on a Rabindranath or Raman earning his bread by manual labour ? Is it not sheer wastage ? Why should not brain workers be considered on a par with manual workers, for both of them perform useful social work ?

A. Intellectual work is important and has an undoubted place in the scheme of life. But what I insist on is the necessity of physical labour. No man, I claim, ought to be free from that obligation. It will serve to improve the quality of his intellectual output. I venture to say

that in ancient times *brahmanas* worked with their body as with their mind. But even if they did not, body labour was a proved necessity at the present time. In this connection I would refer to the life of Tolstoy and how he made famous the theory of bread labour first propounded in his country by the Russian peasant Bondaref. —*H*, 23-2-47, 36.

769. (Same) Q. You have always been against charity and have preached the doctrine that no man is free from the obligation of bread labour. What is your advice for people who are engaged in sedentary occupations, but who lost their all in the last riots (at Noakhali)? Should they migrate and try to find a place where they can go back to their old accustomed habits of life, or should they try to remodel their life in conformity with your ideal of bread labour for everybody? What use shall their special talents be in that case?

A. In reply Gandhiji said that it was true that for years he had been against charity as it was understood and for years he had preached the duty of bread labour. In this connection he mentioned the visit he had received from the District Magistrate and Zaman Saheb along with a police officer. They wanted his opinion about giving doles to the refugees. They had already decided to put before them the work of the removal of water-hyacinth, the repair of roads, village reconstruction or straightening out their own plots of land or building on their land. Those who did any of these things had a perfect right to rations: He said that he liked the idea. But as practical idealist he would not take the refugees by storm. A variety of works should be put before the people and they should have one month's notice that if they made no choice of the occupations suggested nor did they suggest some other acceptable occupation but declined to do any work though their bodies were fit, they would be reluctantly obliged to tell the refugees that they would not be able to give them doles after the expiry of the notice. He advised the refugees and their friends to render full co-operation to the Government in such a scheme of work. It was wrong for any citizen to expect rations without doing some physical work. —*H*, 2-3-47, 47.

770. (Same) The economics of bread labour were the living way of life. It meant that every man had to labour with his body for his food and clothing. If he could convince the people of the value and necessity of bread labour, there would never be any want of bread and cloth. He would have no hesitation in saying to the people with confidence that they must starve and go naked if they would neither work on the land nor spin and weave. They read in the papers that the whole of India was on the brink of starvation and nakedness. If his plan was accepted, they would soon find that India had enough food and enough Khadi which the masses would produce for themselves. No doubt, they should be assisted in the matter of using the land wisely and should also be supplied with spinning and weaving accessories and instructors. He added that he had not hesitated even to discuss his method with Mr. Casey (the Governor of Bengal) who was taking keen interest in the water supply of Bengal. No doubt, Mr. Casey's was a gigantic scheme requiring years and tons of money. His was an fficient but unambitious and inexpensive programme.
— *H*, 7-9-47, 316.

The Principle of Planning for India

771. (Read after 245) Q. The Government has been introducing schemes of industrializing the country for the maximum utilization of her raw materials, not of her abundant and unused man-power which is left to (take care of itself as best as it can). Can such schemes be considered Swadeshi ?

A. Gandhiji remarked that the question had been well put. He did not exactly know what the Government plan was. But he heartily endorsed the proposition that any plan which exploited the raw materials of a country and neglected the potentially more powerful man-power was lop-sided and could never tend to establish human equality.

America was the most industrialized country in the world and yet it had not banished poverty and degradation. That was because it neglected the universal man-power and concentrated power in the hands of the few who amassed fortunes at the expense of the many. The result was that its

industrialization had become a menace to its own poor and to the rest of the world.

If India was to escape such disaster, it had to imitate what was best in America and the other Western countries and leave aside its attractive looking but destructive economic policies. Therefore, real planning consisted in the best utilization of the whole man-power of India and the distribution of the raw products of India in her numerous villages instead of sending them outside and rebuying finished articles at fabulous prices. — *H*, 23-3-47, 79.

Co-operative Effort

772. (Read after 248) Q. Some women workers who earn part of their living by weaving mats were advised by you the other day to work on co-operative principles. Bengal's agriculture has been reduced to an uneconomic proposition through extreme fragmentation of holdings. Would you advise farmers also to adopt co-operative methods?

If so, how are they to effect this under the present system of land-ownership? Should the State make the necessary changes in the law? If the State is not ready, but the people so desire, how are they to work through their own organizations to this end?

A. Replying to the first part of the question, Gandhiji said that he had no doubt that the system of co-operation was far more necessary for the agriculturists than for the mat-weavers. The land, as he maintained, belonged to the State; therefore, it yielded the largest return when it was worked co-operatively.

Let it be remembered that co-operation should be based on strict non-violence. There was no such thing as success of violent co-operation. Hitler was a forcible example of the latter. He also talked vainly of co-operation which was forced upon the people and everyone knew where Germany had been led as a result.

Gandhiji concluded by saying that it would be a sad thing if India also tried to build up the new society based upon co-operation by means of violence. Good brought about through force destroyed individuality. Only when the

was effected through the persuasive power of non-violent non-co-operation, i. e. love, could the foundation of individuality be preserved and real, abiding progress be assured for the world.

Q. At East Keroa (in Noakhali) you advised peasants to work co-operatively in their fields. Should they pool together their land and divide the crop in proportion to the area of the fields they held ? Would you give us an outline of the idea of how exactly they are to work in a co-operative manner ?

A. Gandhiji said that the question was good and admitted of a simple answer. His notion of co-operation was that the land would be held in co-operation by the owners and tilled and cultivated also in co-operation. This would cause a saving of labour, capital, tools etc. The owners would work in co-operation and own capital, tools, animals, seeds etc. in co-operation. Co-operative farming of his conception would change the face of the land and banish poverty and idleness from their midst. All this was only possible if people became friends of one another and as one family. When that happy event took place there would be no ugly sore in the form of a communal problem. —*H*, 9-3-47, 58 and 59.

Economic Equality

773. (Read after 258) Q. You wrote about economic equality in 1941. Do you hold that all persons who perform useful and necessary service in society, whether farmer or *bhangi* (sweeper), engineer or accountant, doctor or teacher, have a moral right only to equal wages with the rest ? Of course, it is understood, educational or other expenses shall be a charge of the State. Our question is, should not all persons get the same wages for their personal needs ? Do you not think that if we work for this equality, it will cut sooner under the root of untouchability than any other process ?

A. As to this Gandhiji had no doubt that if India was to live an exemplary life of independence which would be the envy of the world, all the *bhangis*, doctors, lawyers, teachers, merchants and others would get the same

for an honest day's work. Indian society may never reach the goal but it was the duty of every Indian to set his sail towards that goal and no other if India was to be a happy land. —*H*, 16-3-47, 67.

774. (Same) Q. To those who had lost all their trade, your advice is that they should voluntarily turn themselves into labourers. Who will then look after education, commerce and the like? If you thus dissolve the division of labour, will not the cause of civilization suffer?

A. The question betrayed ignorance of his meaning. If a man could not carry on his original business, it was not open to him but obligatory on him to take to physical labour say scavenging or breaking stones. He believed in the division of labour or work. But he did insist on the equality of wages. The lawyer, the doctor, or the teacher was entitled to no more than the *bhangi*. Then only would division of work uplift the nation or the earth. There was no other royal road to true civilization or happiness. —*H*, 23-3-47, 78.

Capital and labour

775. (Read after 276) Gandhiji wanted to say a few words to the workmen in the workmen's locality. He hoped that there was no distinction between the Hindus and the Muslims in labour. They were all labourers. If the communal canker entered the labour ranks, both will weaken labour and therefore themselves and the country. Labour was a great leveller of all distinctions. If they realized that truth, he would like them to go a step further. Labour, because it chose to remain unintelligent, either became subservient or insolently believed in damaging capitalists' goods and machinery or even in killing capitalists. He was a labourer by conviction and a *bhangi*. As such his interests were bound with those of labour. As such he wished to tell them that violence would never save them. They would be killing the goose that laid golden eggs. What he had been saying for years was that labour was far superior to capital. Without labour, gold, silver and copper were a useless It was labour which extracted precious ore from

the bowels of the earth. He could quite conceive labour existing without metal. Labour was priceless, not gold. He wanted marriage between capital and labour. They could work wonders in co-operation. But that could happen only when labour was intelligent enough to co-operate with itself and then offer co-operation with capital on terms of honourable equality. Capital controlled labour because it knew the art of combination. Drops in separation could only fade away; drops in co-operation made the ocean which carried on its broad bosom ocean greyhounds. Similarly, if all the labourers in any part of the world combined together they could not be tempted by higher wages or helplessly allow themselves to be attracted for, say, a pittance. A true and non-violent combination of labour would act like a magnet attracting to it all the needed capital. Capitalists would then exist only as trustees. When that happy day dawned, there would be no difference between capital and labour. Then labour will have ample food, good and sanitary dwellings, all the necessary education for their children, ample leisure for self-education and proper medical assistance. —*H*, 7-9-47, 311.

The Farmer's Share

776. (Read after 281) Q. We agree that intrinsically a movement for reducing the share of the owner from half to a third of the crop is justified. But could not the present *Tebhaga* Movement in Bengal be postponed until such time as the affected persons can be smoothly absorbed in other occupations according to some long-term plan sponsored by the State ?

We know you have said that the only way to effect such a radical transformation in society is through non-violence. But interested parties will sleep over that portion of your advice and parade your moral support to their demand and carry on the Movement in their own violent way. Hence, is it not wrong for you to lend support to the Movement under the present circumstances when there is every chance of the entire middle class of Bengal being completely ruined as a result ? The common villager will

also suffer no less because he will also be deprived of the services now being rendered to the village economy by them.

A. In reply, Gandhiji uttered the warning that he only dealt with principles as he knew them. He had not studied the local question. Therefore, the questioner ran the risk of his ignorance causing injustice.

He felt that the question betrayed exaggeration on the part of the questioner. There was no ruin impending the landlord. His land was not being confiscated. His portion, which he could take even if he was in Timbuctoo, was merely to be reduced from 50% to 33%. He could see no ruin in the proposal. He was afraid that they were too much obsessed by the communal question. They should rise above it and examine every problem strictly on merits. Then they would never go wrong. Therefore they should accept the moral principle underlying the demand for reduction of the owner's share and work for solid amendments in which they were likely to succeed. Let them not face confiscation rather than moderate reduction. Let them remember that for years past India had lived through confiscation. Industry after industry had been ruined and both the artisans as well as the farmers of India had been progressively reduced to poverty.

If the desired change were brought about through non-violent means, the world would not be deprived of the talents of the classes, but then the latter would not exercise them at the expense of the labourers. In the non-violent order of the future, the land would belong to the State, for had it not been said '*sabhi bhumi Gopalaki*'? Under such dispensation, there would be no waste of talents and labour. This would be impossible through violent means. It was therefore a truism to say that the utter ruin of the land-owner brought about through violence would also involve the ruin of the labourers in the end. If the land-owners, therefore, acted wisely, no party would lose. —*H*, 9-3-47, 57.

The Theory of Trusteeship

777. (Read after 283) Q. You have asked rich men to be trustees. Is it implied that they should give up private

ownership in their property and create out of it a trust valid in the eyes of law and managed democratically? How will the successor of the present incumbent be determined on his demise?

A. In answer Gandhiji said that he adhered to the osition taken by him years ago that everything belonged to God and was from God. Therefore it was for His people as a whole, not for a particular individual. When an individual had more than his proportionate portion he became a trustee of that portion for God's people.

God who was all-powerful had no need to store. He created from day to day, hence men also should in theory live from day to day and not stock things. If this truth was imbibed by the people generally, it would become legalized and trusteeship would become a legalized institution. He wished it became a gift from India to the world. Then there would be no exploitation and no reserves as in Australia and other countries for White men and their posterity. In these distinctions lay the seeds of a war more virulent than the last two. As to the successor, the trustee in office would have the right to nominate his successor subject to legal sanction. —*H*, 23-2-47, 39.

778. (Same) Q. How would the successor of a trustee be determined? Will he only have the right of proposing a name, the right of finalization being vested in the State?

A. As he had said yesterday, choice should be given to the original owner who became the first trustee, but the choice must be finalized by the State. Such arrangement puts a a check on the State as well as the individual.

Q. When the replacement of private by public property thus takes place through the operation of the theory of trusteeship, will the ownership vest in the State, which is an instrument of violence, or in associations of a voluntary character like village communes and municipalities, which may, of course, derive their final authority from State-made laws?

A. That question involved some confusion of thought. Legal ownership in the transformed condition was vested in the trustee, not in the State. It was in order to avoid

confiscation that the doctrine of trusteeship came into play, retaining for society the ability of the original owner in his own right.

Nor did he, the speaker, hold that the State must always be based on violence. It might be so in theory, but the practice of the theory demanded a State which would for the most part be based on non-violence. —*H*, 16-2-47, 25.

Franchise : Upper and Lower Age-limits

779. (Read after 303) As to the franchise, he swore by the franchise of all adults, male and female, above the age of twentyone or even eighteen. He would bar old men like himself. They were of no use as voters. India and the rest of the world did not belong to those who were on the point of dying. To them belonged death, life to the young. Thus he would have a bar against persons beyond a certain age, say fifty, as he would against youngsters below eighteen.

Side by side with adult franchise, or even before that, he pleaded for universal education, not necessarily literary except as perhaps an aid. English education, he was convinced, had starved our minds, enervated them and never prepared them for brave citizenship. He would give them all sufficient knowledge in the rich languages of which any country would be proud. Education in the understanding of the rights of citizenship was a short-term affair if they were honest and earnest. —*H*, 2-3-47, 45.

Ideal of International Dependence

780. (Read after 316) Q. A man who sacrifices self-interest for the sake of his community is at least unselfish to that extent. How can the heart of such a man be affected so that he will sacrifice communal interests for the interest of the nation ?

A. A man whose spirit of sacrifice did not go beyond his own community became selfish himself and also made his community selfish. In his opinion the logical conclusion of self-sacrifice was that the individual sacrificed himself for the community, the community sacrificed itself for the district, the district for the province, the province for the nation and the nation for the world. A drop torn from the

ocean perished without doing any good. If it remained a part of the ocean, it shared the glory of carrying on its bosom a fleet of mighty ships.

Q. In Free India whose interest shall be supreme ? If a neighbouring State is in want, what should Free India do?

A. Gandhiji said that the first part of the question had been answered in the above. A truly independent India was bound to run to the help of its neighbours in distress. He instanced Afghanistan, Ceylon and Burma and said that the rule also applied to the neighbours of the last three and, thus by implication, they became India's neighbours too. And thus, he said, that if individual sacrifice was a living sacrifice, it embraced the whole of humanity.

Q. Can a man serve his immediate neighbours and yet serve the whole of humanity? What is the true meaning of Swadeshi?

A. Gandhiji said that the question had been answered by him on the previous evening. He believed in the truth implicitly that a man could serve his neighbours and humanity at the same time, the condition being that the service of the neighbours was in no way selfish or exclusive, i. e. did not in any way involve the exploitation of any other human being. The neighbours would then understand the spirit in which such service was given. They would also know that they would be expected to give their services to their neighbours. Thus considered, it would spread like the proverbial snowball gathering strength in geometrical progression encircling the whole earth.

It followed that Swadeshi was that spirit which dictated man to serve his next door neighbour to the exclusion of any other. The condition that he had already mentioned was that the neighbour thus served had in his turn to serve his own neighbour. In this sense Swadeshi was never exclusive. It recognized the scientific limitation of human capability for service. —*H*, 23-3-47, 78, 79.

Provincialism

781. (Read after 360) (Gandhiji) then referred to the provincial spirit that seemed to be infecting the provinces.

Thus, he saw in the papers, that some Assamese thought that Assam belonged exclusively to the Assamese. If that spirit fired every province, to whom could India belong? He held that the people of all the provinces belonged to India and India belonged to all. The only condition was that no one could go and settle in another province to exploit it or rule it or to injure its interest in any way All were servants of India and they lived only in the spirit of service. —*H*, 7-9-47, 311.

782. (Same) Bihar is undoubtedly for Biharis but it is also for India. What is true of Bihar is equally true of all the provinces in the Union. No Indian can be treated as a foreigner in Bihar as he may be treated in Pakistan of today and vice versa. It is necessary to bear this difference in mind if we are to avoid difficulties and heart-burn.

Though then every Indian of the Union has a right to settle in Bihar, he must not do so to oust the Biharis. If the qualification was not actively operated, it is possible to conceive such an inrush of non-Bihari Indians as to flood out the Biharis. We are thus forced to the conclusion that a non-Bihari who settles in Bihar must do so to serve Bihar, not to exploit it after the manner of our old masters.

This way of examining the proposition brings us to the question of the zamindars and the ryots. When a non-Bihari enters Bihar for the sake of making money, he will in all probability do so to exploit the ryot in league with the zamindars. If the zamindars really become the trustees of their zamindari for the sake of the ryots, there never could be any unholy league as has been here conceived. There is the difficult zamindari question awaiting solution in Bihar. What one would love to see is proper, impartial and satisfactory understanding between the zamindars, big and small, the ryots and the Government so that when the law is passed, it may not be a dead letter nor need force be used against the zamindars or the ryots. Would that all changes, some of which must be radical, take place throughout India without bloodshed and without force! So much for the new-comer from the other provinces of India.

What about the services? It seems that if the vinces are all to make equal progress in all directions, the services should be largely confined to the inhabitants of the province concerned for the sake of India as a whole. No province and no tribe or clan can be kept backward if India is to stand up erect before the world. It will never do so through its arms of which the world is sick. It must shine through its innate culture expressed in every citizen's life and in the socialism I have recently described in these columns. That means elimination of all force for the sake of popularizing one's doctrines and schemes. A thing which is truly popular rarely, if ever, requires force save that of public opinion to make itself acceptable to all. Therefore, the ugly scenes of violence by individuals witnessed in Bihar and Orissa and Assam should never have been. Popular governments are functioning to redress any irregularity or encroachment by persons from other provinces. The provincial governments are bound to give full protection to all the comers from outside their provinces. 'Use what you consider yours so as not to injure others,' is a famous maxim of equity. It is also a grand moral code of conduct. How apposite today!

Hitherto I have dealt with the question of new arrivals. What of those who were on the 15th of August in Bihar — some in Government employment and some otherwise employed? So far as I can see, they should be on the same footing as the Biharis unless they make another choice. Naturally, they should not form a separate colony as if they were foreigners. 'Live in Rome as the Romans do', is a sound commonsense maxim so long as it does not apply to Roman vices. The process of progressive blending must be one of rejecting the bad and absorbing the good. As a Gujarati in Bengal, I must quickly absorb all that is good in Bengal and never touch that which is bad. I must ever serve Bengal, never selfishly exploit it. The bane of our life is our exclusive provincialism, whereas my province must be co-extensive with the Indian boundary so that ultimately it extends to the boundary of the earth. Else it perishes. — *H*, 21-9-47, 332.

Non-violent Defence

783. (Read after 426) Q. What is a woman to do when attacked by miscreants? To run away, or resist with violence? To have boats in readiness to fly or prepare to defend with weapons?

A. My answer to this question is very simple. For me there can be no preparation for violence. All preparation must be for non-violence if courage of the highest type is to be developed. Violence can only be tolerated as being preferable always to cowardice. Therefore I would have no boats ready for a flight in emergency. For a non-violent person there is no emergency, but quiet dignified preparation for death. Hence whether it is a man or a woman he or she will defy death even when he or she is unassisted; for the real assistance is from God. I can preach no other thing and I am here to practise what I preach. Whether such an opportunity will occur to me or be given to me I do not know. If there are women who when assailed by miscreants cannot resist themselves without arms they do not need to be advised to carry arms. They will do so. There is something wrong in this constant enquiry as to whether to bear arms or not. People have to learn to be naturally independent. If they will remember the central teaching, namely, that the real effective resistance lies in non-violence, they will model their conduct accordingly. And that is what the world had been doing although unthinkingly. Since it is not the highest courage, namely, courage born of non-violence, it arms itself even unto the atom bomb. Those who do not see in it the futility of violence will naturally arm themselves to the best of their ability.

In India since my return from South Africa, there has been conscious and constant training in non-violence with the result we have seen.

Q. Can a woman be advised to take her own life rather than surrender?

A. The question requires a definite answer. I answered it in Delhi just before leaving for Noakhali. A woman would most certainly take her own life rather than surrender.

In other words, surrender has no room in my plan of life. But I was asked in what way to take one's own life. I promptly said it was not for me to prescribe the means, and behind the approval of suicide under such circumstances was and is the belief that one whose mind is prepared for even suicide will have the requisite courage for such mental resistance and such internal purity that her assailant will be disarmed. I could not carry the argument any further because it does not admit of further development. It requires positive proof which, I own, is lacking.

Q. If the choice is between taking one's own life and that of the assailant, which would you advise ?

A. When it is a question of choice between killing oneself or the assailant, I have no doubt in my mind that the first should be the choice. —*H*, 9-2-47, 13.

Limitations of Violence

784. (Read after 430) Good brought through force destroyed individuality. Only when the change was effected through the persuasive power of non-violent non-co-operation, i. e. love, could the foundation of individuality be preserved and real, abiding progress be assured for the world. —*H*, 9-3-47, 58.

Missionary Effort and the State

785. (Read after 634) The State should undoubtedly be secular. Everyone living in it should be entitled to profess his religion without let or hindrance, so long as the citizen obeyed the common law of the land. There should be no interference with missionary effort, but no mission could enjoy the patronage of the State as it did during the foreign regime. —*H*, 24-8-47, 292.

Untouchability

786. (Read after 684) *Q.* How can the caste-Hindus look after the interests of the Untouchables ? How can they realize the feelings of the classes who have suffered so long at their hands ? Is it not then better to entrust the interests of the Untouchables to men of their own caste ?

A. Gandhiji was of opinion that the caste-Hindu owed a sacred duty to the so-called Untouchables. He must become a *bhangi* (sweeper) in name and action. When that happened the Untouchables would rise at a bound and Hinduism would leave a rich legacy to the world. If that happened, the system of cleaning closets would undergo transformation. In England real *bhangis* were famous engineers and sanitarians. That could not happen in India so long as society was sluggish and slothful. —*H*, 23-3-47, 78.

Dowry System

787. (Read after 699) Q. *Namashudra* girls are generally married at the age of 12 or 13; formerly the usual age was 8 or 9. The bridegroom has to pay a dowry of Rs. 150 for the bride. The average difference of age between the two is about 12 to 15 years. As a result of this the number of widows in *namashudra* society is rather large. Among one section of the caste, widow remarriage was prevalent. But in imitation of another section which was looked upon as superior, the former are giving up that practice. What is your advice regarding child marriage and widow remarriage ?

A. Dealing with the question Gandhiji said that his opinion was definite. In the first instance there should be no possibility of child widows. He was averse to child marriages. It was an evil custom which unfortunately the *namashudras* had perhaps taken from the so-called higher castes.

Gandhiji was also against the system of dowry. It was nothing but the sale of girls. That there should be castes even amongst *namashudras* was deplorable and he would strongly advise them to abolish all caste-distinctions amongst themselves. And in this they should bear in mind the opinion the speaker had often expressed that all caste-distinctions should be abolished, and there should be only one caste, namely, *bhangis* and all Hindus should take pride in being called *bhangis* and nothing else. This applied to the *namashudras* as well.

When child marriages were abolished, naturally there would be few, if any, young widows. As a general rule he was for one man one wife for life, and one woman one husband

for life. Custom had familiarized women in the so-called higher castes with enforced widowhood. Contrary was the rule with men. He called it a disgrace, but whilst society was in that pitiable condition, he advocated widow remarriage for all young widows. He believed in equality of the sexes and, therefore, he could only think of the same rights for women as men. —*H*, 16-3-47, 67.

Caste, Community and Marriage

788. (Read after 700) *Q*. You advocate inter-caste marriages. Do you also favour marriage between Indians professing different religions? Should they declare themselves as belonging to no denomination, or can they continue their old religious practices and yet intermarry? If so, what form should the marriage ceremony take? Is it to be a purely civil function or a religious function?

Do you consider religion to be exclusively a personal matter?

A. Though Gandhiji admitted that he had not always held the view, he had come to the conclusion long ago that an inter-religious marriage was a welcome event whenever it took place. His stipulation was that such connection was not a product of lust. In his opinion it was no marriage. It was illicit intercourse. Marriage in his estimation was a sacred institution. Hence there must be mutual friendship, either party having equal respect for the religion of the other. There was no question in this of conversion. Hence the marriage ceremony would be performed by the priests belonging to either faith. This happy event could take place when the communities shed mutual enmity and had regard for the religions of the world. —*H*, 16-3-47, 63.

789. (Same) *Q*. You say that you are in favour of inter-religious marriages, but at the same time you say that each party should retain his or her own religion and, therefore, you said, you tolerated even civil marriages. Are there any instances of parties belonging to different religions keeping up their own religions to the end of their lives? And is not the institution of civil marriage a negation of religion and does it not tend towards laxity of religion?

A. Gandhiji said that the questions were appropriate. He had no instances in mind where the parties had clung to their respective faiths upto death, because these friends whom he knew had not yet died. He had, however, under his observation men and women professing different religions and each clinging to his or her own faith without abatement. But he would go so far as to say that they need not wait for the discovery of past instances. They should create new ones so that timid ones may shed their timidity.

As to civil marriages, he did not believe in them, but he welcomed the institution of civil marriage as a much needed reform for the sake of reform. —*H*, 16-3-47, 67.

Purdah System

790. (Read after 707) *Q.* Do you not think that a strict enforcement of the *purdah* system would improve the moral condition of women ?

A. Gandhiji was warned by some Muslim critics against speaking on the *purdah.* He had therefore some hesitation in speaking about it. But he took heart when he turned round and saw that many Hindu women observed it and that numerous Malaya Muslim women of whom he had many friends did not observe the *purdah.* He also knew many distinguished Muslim women of India who did not observe it. Lastly the real *purdah* was of the heart. A woman who peeped through the *purdah* and contemplated a male on whom her gaze fell violated the spirit behind it. If a woman observed it in spirit, she was truly carrying out what the great Prophet had said. —*H*, 23-3-47, 78.

Religious Instruction and the State

791. (Read after 714) *Q.* Should religious instruction form part of the school curriculum as approved by the State ? Do you favour separate schools for children belonging to different denominations for facility of religious instruction ? Or, should religious instruction be left in the hands of private bodies ? If so, do you think it is right for the State to subsidize such bodies ?

A. As to this question Gandhiji said that he did not believe in State religion even though the whole community had one religion. The State interference would probably always be unwelcome. Religion was purely a personal matter. There were in reality as many religions as minds. Each mind had a different conception of God from that of the other.

He was also opposed to State aid, partly or wholly, to religious bodies. For he knew that an institution or group, which did not manage to finance its own religious teaching, was a stranger to true religion. This did not mean that the State schools would not give ethical teaching. The fundamental ethics were common to all religions. —*H*, 16-3-47, 63.

792. (Same) I do not believe that the State can concern itself or cope with religious instruction. I believe that religious education must be the sole concern of religious associations. Do not mix up religion and ethics. I believe that fundamental ethics is common to all religions. Teaching of fundamental ethics is undoubtedly a function of the State. By religion I have not in mind fundamental ethics but what goes by the name of denominationalism. We have suffered enough from State-aided religion and a State Church. A society or a group, which depends partly or wholly on State aid for the existence of its religion, does not deserve or, better still, does not have any religion worth the name. I do not need to give any illustrations in support of this obvious truth as it is to me. —*H*, 23-3-47, 76.

793. (Same) Religion was a personal matter and if we succeeded in confining it to the personal plane, all would be well in our political life. —*H*, 31-8-47, 303.

Reason for Assistance during the first World War

794. (Read before 449) Not only did I offer my services at the time of the Zulu revolt but before that at the time of the Boer War, and not only did I raise recruits in India during the late war, but I raised an ambulance corps in 1914 in London. If therefore I have sinned, the cup of my sins is full to the brim. I lost no occasion for serving the Government at all times. Two questions presented themselves to me during all these crises. What was my duty as

a citizen of the empire as I then believed myself to be, and what was my duty as an out-and-out believer in the religion of *ahimsa* — non-violence ?

I know now, that I was wrong in thinking that I was a citizen of the empire. But on those four occasions I did honestly believe that in spite of the many disabilities that my country was labouring under, it was making its way towards freedom, and that on the whole the Government from the popular standpoint was not wholly bad and that the British administrators were honest though insular and dense. Holding that view, I set about doing what an ordinary Englishman would do in the circumstances. I was not wise or important enough to take independent action. I had no business to judge or scrutinize ministerial decisions with the solemnity of a tribunal. I did not impute malice to the ministers either at the time of the Boer war, the Zulu revolt or the late war. I did not consider Englishmen nor do I now consider them as particularly bad or worse than other human beings. I considered and still consider them as capable of high motives and action as any other body of men and equally capable of making mistakes. I therefore felt that I sufficiently discharged my duty as a man and a citizen by offering my humble services to the empire in the hour of its need whether local or general. That is how I would expect every Indian to act by his country under Swaraj. I would be deeply distressed, if on every conceivable occasion every one of us were to be a law unto oneself and to scrutinize in golden scales every action of our future National Assembly. I would surrender my judgement in most matters to national representatives, taking particular care in making my choice of such representatives. I know that in no other manner would a democratic Government be possible for one single day.

The whole situation is now changed for me. My eyes, I fancy, are opened. Experience has made me wiser. I consider the existing system of Government to be wholly bad and requiring special national effort to end or mend it. It does not possess within itself any capacity for self-improvement. That I still believe many English administrators to be

honest does not assist me, because I consider them to be as blind and deluded as I was myself. Therefore I can take no pride in calling the empire mine or describing myself as a citizen. On the contrary, I fully realize that I am a *pariah*, untouchable of the empire. I must therefore constantly pray for its radical reconstruction or total destruction, even as a Hindu *pariah* would be fully justified in so praying about Hinduism or Hindu society.

The next point, that of *ahimsa*, is more abstruse. My conception of *ahimsa* impels me always to dissociate myself from almost every one of the activities I am engaged in. My soul refuses to be satisfied so long as it is a helpless witness of a single wrong or a single misery. But it is not possible for me, a weak, frail, miserable being, to mend every wrong or to hold myself free of blame for all the wrong I see. The spirit in me pulls one way, the flesh in me pulls in the opposite direction. There is freedom from the action of these two forces, but that freedom is attainable only by slow and painful stages. I cannot attain freedom by a mechanical refusal to act, but only by intelligent action in a detached manner. This struggle resolves itself into an incessant crucifixion of the flesh so that the spirit may become entirely free.

* * *

I was again an ordinary citizen no wiser than my fellows, myself believing in *ahimsa* and the rest not believing in it at all but refusing to do their duty of assisting the Government because they were actuated by anger and malice. They were refusing out of their ignorance and weakness. As a fellow worker, it became my duty to guide them aright. I therefore placed before them their clear duty, explained the doctrine of *ahimsa* to them and let them make their choice which they did. I do not repent of my action in terms of *ahimsa*. For under Swaraj too I would not hesitate to advise those who would bear arms to do so and fight for the country.

* * *

That brings to me the second question. Under Swaraj of my dream there is no necessity for arms at all. But I do

not expect that dream to materialize in its fulness as a result of the present effort, first because the present effort is not directed to that end as an immediate goal and secondly because I do not consider myself advanced enough to be able to prescribe a detailed course of conduct to the nation for such preparation. I am still myself too full of passion and other frailties of human nature to feel the call or the capacity. All I claim for myself is, that I am incessantly trying to overcome every one of my weaknesses. I have attained great capacity, I believe, for suppressing and curbing my senses, but I have not become incapable of sin, i. e. of being acted upon by my senses. I believe it to be possible for every human being to attain that blessed and indescribable sinless state in which he feels within himself the presence of God to the exclusion of everything else. It is, I must confess, as yet a distant scene. And therefore, it is not possible for me to show the nation a present way to complete non-violence, in practice. — *YI*, 17-11-21, 367.

True Morality (Read after 622)

795. True morality consists, not in following the beaten track, but in finding out the true path for ourselves and in fearlessly following it. —*ER*, 38.

796. No action which is not voluntary can be called moral. So long as we act like machines, there can be no question of morality. If we want to call an action moral, it should have been done consciously and as a matter of duty. Any action that is dictated by fear or by coercion of any kind ceases to be moral. It also follows that all good deeds that are prompted by hope of happiness in the next world cease to be moral. —*ER*, 43.

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